



THE INDEPENDENT

No 3,233

SATURDAY 1 MARCH 1997

WEATHER: Mainly dry

(IR65p) 60p



fashion

THE INDEPENDENT
COLLECTION
64 PAGES FREE

Plus arts, TV, entertainment in The Eye plus The Long Weekend





Now Tories fear a Blair revolution

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

John Major yesterday warned the country that it risked the midsummer nightmare of a Labour landslide, opening the way for Tony Blair to overturn Tory success with the policies of full-blooded Socialism.

Fresh from the triumph of the Wirral South by-election, the Labour leader yesterday appeared at his party's Welsh conference, in Llandudno, with new MP Ben Chapman, 56, a former civil servant.

Mr Blair said there was a new-found trust in New Labour, "the one nation party of British politics", and that Wirral South represented "nothing short of a political uprising against the Tories deep in their heartlands".

The voters of Wirral South had had their say; now it was time for the rest of the country to have their

chance. Mr Blair urged the Prime Minister: "For heaven's sake, in the interests of the country, stop the dithering."

Faced with the 17-per-cent swing to Labour in Wirral South, the Tory reaction was confused, with some

There is a new trust in New Labour, "the one nation party of politics" ... Wirral South is "a political uprising against the Tories deep in their heartlands." - Tony Blair

ministers confidently saying they would win it all back in an election at most two months away on 1 May.

But others warned of the revolutionary threat posed by Mr Blair's Socialist party to the family, community and country.

Delivering both messages at the same time, Mr Major said the by-election marked the end of the

"phony war". He said in a BBC interview: "We will win back Wirral at the general election". But he also warned of the consequences of a Wirral-scale general election landslide.

"In a few weeks' time," he said, "if we had voting like last night, there would be a Labour government with a clear majority, able to do what it wished, without let or hindrance".

On the basis of the Wirral South swing, Labour would have a majority of more than 290. Some of Mr Major's senior advisers are warning that a Labour majority on that scale would deliver more than 100 fully-fledged Socialist MPs into the Labour ranks in the Commons, "with all the risks that would entail".

The risk of talking up the Labour threat is that it might add to Labour credibility and further depress Conservative morale, at a time when even some ministers believe that the party is doomed.

The evidence for that pessimism can be seen in Westminster's up-and-running campaign for the next Conservative leadership contest, which is built on an assumption of defeat.

Mr Blair said that while the Government had long ago given up governing, its complacent reaction to Wirral South showed that it had also given up listening.

"They dismiss it as a protest vote of no significance and carry on," he said. "Arrogant, out of touch, squabbling already about who should be the next leader, that is today's Conservative Party." Labour's Chief

Whip, Donald Dewar, said: "Major seems to have lost the plot. It is clear that John Major has been up all night and what's more, his morale has hit rock bottom. Nothing else can explain the gobbledygook that he talked in his interviews today."

Mr Blair said that while the Government had long ago given up governing, its complacent reaction to Wirral South showed that it had also given up listening.

"They dismiss it as a protest vote of no significance and carry on," he said. "Arrogant, out of touch, squabbling already about who should be the next leader, that is today's Conservative Party." Labour's Chief

Minister said: "The whole Cabinet thinks it's going to win the election, not just me ... and I think the parliamentary [Conservative] party increasingly believes that is the case."

Mr Blair said that while the Government had long ago given up governing, its complacent reaction to Wirral South showed that it had also given up listening.

"They dismiss it as a protest vote of no significance and carry on," he said. "Arrogant, out of touch, squabbling already about who should be the next leader, that is today's Conservative Party." Labour's Chief

interview. "But we now think there is the best chance we have ever had".

Labour had contacted 25,000 people during the campaign, and Mr Prescott said: "We had the best organisation and the best candidate. We used all the modern methods. We had good policy, good organisation, and it clearly paid off."

But the Prime Minister told Channel 4 News that Mr Blair was different things to different people. In *Country Life* magazine, he was a country gentleman, but in an interview with the *Sun* he said he ate fish and chips in front of the television. "They are saying different things to different people."

Mr Chapman, is expected to take his parliamentary place on Monday, when the Government will again move into a Commons minority of one, with 322 seats to the Opposition's 323.

Wirral aftermath, page 7

Stonehenge is French imposter

David Keys
Archaeology Correspondent

Stonehenge - the pre-eminent symbol of Britain's ancient heritage - wasn't built by the British at all, but by the French, according to the latest archaeological research.

A comparative analysis of British and French prehistoric monuments has revealed that Stonehenge has little in common with other British Neolithic structures, but shares many features with monuments on the other side of the Channel. Stonehenge's horseshoe design is very rare in Britain, but common in western France - especially Brittany.

Dr Aubrey Burl, one of Britain's leading prehistorians, said last night: "The array of non-British features in it suggest that Stonehenge was probably the handiwork of a powerful and intrusive aristocracy from somewhere in western France, perhaps Brittany."

The Stonehenge horseshoe's astronomical alignment - linking it with the mid-winter sunset - is not typical of British prehistoric sites, but is again common in Brittany.

The geometry and astronomical alignments of the rectangle formed by Stonehenge's so-called Station Stones have no equivalents in Britain or Ireland but do have parallels in north-west France. Stonehenge's figurative art is also unique in Britain, but common in Brittany.

Until two years ago, archaeologists thought the main part of Stonehenge was built around 2,000 BC. New dating tests have now revealed, however, that



the monument was constructed around 600 years earlier.

This means that Stonehenge is not an early Bronze Age structure of the so-called Wessex Culture which flourished from c2100 BC to c1600 BC, but was instead built by people in the previous period, the Neolithic, when the stone circles

of Avebury, and four massive earthwork ritual enclosures in Wiltshire and Dorset were constructed at virtually the same time - around 2600 BC.

Significantly, Avebury also once appeared to have had a central horseshoe layout - and may therefore also have shared in the French connection.

It may well be that much of Hampshire, Wiltshire and Dorset were taken over by conquerors from Western France sometime between 2800 and 2600 BC and that the great prehistoric temple of Stonehenge was as much a symbol of the new order and of conquest as it was of religious devotion.

Le Carré dines out with Karla

Christopher Bellamy
Defence Correspondent

The creator of spy-master George Smiley last night sat down to dinner with the man who, in 1991, became the real-life version of Smiley's arch-enemy, Karla.

Yevgeny Primakov, the Russian Foreign Minister, met his favourite author John le Carré, for the first time last night at the Russian Embassy in Kensington Palace Gardens.

The thaw in the Cold War means that le Carré was able to meet the man who headed the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service - VRS, the successor to the KGB - from 1991 until he became Foreign Minister in January last year.

Mr Primakov has had extensive dealings with the KGB throughout his life, and there have been reports that he was an active KGB officer during his early career as a journalist and academic.

Earlier yesterday, Mr Primakov met Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, who presented him with a copy of *Smiley's People* signed by himself and John le Carré.

Mr Primakov, 68, arrived on Thursday and dined with John

Major. Yesterday he made a speech to the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House.

"He's a tough, impressive negotiator who knows his stuff," a diplomat said yesterday. "There's a bit of the old style and a lot of the new style. He's an impressive operator. And he's very secure in the Russian system."

Mr Primakov is a life-long friend of Oleg Kalugin, the KGB general who was chief of counter-intelligence and later turned against the organisation after 1990. They met in 1959 as trainee journalists.

Yesterday's negotiations centred on Nato's plans to enlarge to embrace the new democracies of Eastern Europe which will require a "charter" between the alliance and Russia.

Although Mr Primakov said Russia still opposed Nato enlargement to the east, he and his British counterpart appeared to agree on many things.

It is not quite clear whose idea it was for Mr Primakov to meet John le Carré last night. But a Russian Embassy official said, "John le Carré's name is quite well known in Russia."

The PEP that likes to say

NO

salesmen.
commission.
jargon.
hassle.

direct

0345 95 95 95

Open 9am-5pm 7 days a week. For the Growth PEP, minimum investment £50 a month or £1,000 lump sum. For the Income PEP £5,000 lump sum only.

Virgin Direct Personal Financial Service Ltd is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority. The price of units and any income from them can go down as well as up and you may not get back all the money you invest. For your security, all calls to Virgin Direct will be recorded and randomly monitored.



THE BROADSHEET	
Business & City	22-25
Comment	19-21
Foreign News	13-17
Gazette	18
Home News	2-12
Leading Articles	19
LETTERS	
Letters	19
Obituaries	18
Saturday Story	20
Shares	24
Sport	26-32
LONG WEEKEND	2-12
Arts	4-5
BOOKS	
Country, Gardening	18, 19
Crossword, Games	2
Motoring	22
Property	23, 24
TV & Radio	31
Weather	31

£1.7m fine for fatal fall
Four companies were fined a record £1.7m over the collapse of a ferry walkway in 1994 that left six people dead. Page 5

NatWest's £50m blow
NatWest said first-half profits would take a £50m hit to cover "mispricing errors" at its investment banking arm. Page 22

news

significant shorts

EU postpones decision on citrus fruit restrictions

A European Union committee which is debating whether to impose trade restrictions on citrus fruits has failed to reach a final decision.

The Committee on Plant Health will wait until its next Brussels meeting in a month's time to decide whether to introduce a ban on citrus from South Africa and South America, from where Britain gets its entire summer citrus supply.

The Ministry of Agriculture is fighting swingeing restrictions and British producers are angry that other member states support a ban which would give Mediterranean citrus growers control of the European market.

Southern European fruit is harvested in the winter and the proposed ban, sponsored by Greece, would lead to chronic shortages and high prices of citrus in British shops this summer.

Doug Henderson, chief executive of the Fresh Produce Consortium, said: "We will not allow them to creep this through in carpet slippers."

Ian Burrell

Mummified body found in cupboard

Police called to a routine domestic dispute found a mummified body of a nearly naked man in a cupboard under the stairs, a court heard yesterday. The badly decomposed and maggot-infested body of 51-year-old Jeffrey Brown, wearing only an anorak, vest and socks, had been in the cupboard since his death five months earlier. Nottingham Crown Court was told.

Cheryl Godward, the resident of the house at Sneinton, Nottingham, and a friend of the dead man, told police she left him at her home with two prostitutes. Judge John Hopkin jailed Godward, 29, for four years after she admitted obstructing the coroner. The judge said that because of Godward's actions in concealing the body, it had been impossible to establish how the former miner met his death.

Godward said when she returned Mr Brown was either unconscious or dead. She put him in the cupboard and nailed it shut. The authorities were only alerted when, five months later, police were called to a domestic dispute and were met by a "pungent" smell.

New lease of life for Brian



Councillors at Swansea yesterday agreed to lift a 17-year ban on the Monty Python film *The Life of Brian*.

They decided that the movie – a spoof on the Jesus Christ story and condemned as blasphemous by some church leaders when it was first released – could be screened in the city in aid of Comic Relief next month.

In 1980 councillors voted 22-15 to refuse the film a licence.

Car thieves take a day off

A police force was celebrating another success for its "zero tolerance" anti-crime campaign yesterday – 24 hours without a car theft.

Cleveland Police's three month offensive to clamp down on all kinds of offending, no matter how trivial, has already produced a string of benefits and the car thieves' day off is seen as another milestone. The fresh breakthrough came during the 24 hours of Wednesday when, according to police records, not a single car was taken in Middlesbrough, long regarded as one of the nation's auto crime capitals.

On Thursday there were three car thefts – but even that was not totally bad news in a town which averages seven such thefts a day.

A special crackdown on burglary in the force area led to a 37.7 per cent decrease in the number of incidents last month. Over a four month period 1,214 burglaries have been detected, with 945 arrests and property worth £167,875 recovered.

BT museum to close

British Telecom is to close the shutters on its national telephones museum, blaming falling attendances and commercial pressures. The central London site houses some 800 exhibits from the UK's dominant role in the development of telephones and telegraphs from the early 19th century to the most modern fibre optic technology.

Despite free admission the museum attracted just 20,000 visitors last year and will shut for good on 1 August. Four staff will be redeployed or take voluntary redundancy, while the remaining two senior employees will try to find a new home for the world's largest collection, which includes a warehouse near Heathrow airport filled with tens of thousands of items. BT insisted it remained committed to managing its heritage. Staff were said to be "very sad" about the decision.

'Stowaway' reluctant to leave prison

A judge yesterday expressed astonishment that a fireman should be allowed to "stowaway" in Brixton Prison, south London, for nearly a week after becoming bored with life on the outside.

Judge Jeffrey Rucker said he could not understand why David Watson should want to ask for a further spell of bed and board at Her Majesty's pleasure, and expressed similar puzzlement that the authorities there should find him a cell.

When prison officials realised the firefighter was on bail and that they were holding him illegally, he was quickly escorted to unwanted freedom.

"I must admit this has its humorous aspects. But I assure you that we are treating this matter most seriously," said the judge.

MSF chief re-elected

Roger Lyons has been re-elected general secretary of Manufacturing Science Finance, the biggest white collar union in the private sector. Mr Lyons, a Labour Party supporter, defeated the Communist-backed Joe Bowers, a Belfast regional officer of the union, by 56,510 votes to 26,668 – a margin on two to one.

Barrie Clement

people



Fondest farewell: Imelda Marcos mourns her husband as his body arrives back in Manila

Imelda's red letter day is no cold comfort for Ferdinand

She may be the proud (and shameless) owner of the world's largest collection of loafers, slingshots, stilettoes, sandals and associated footwear, but Imelda Marcos can still claim familiarity with that most unwelcome feature of modern life – the final demand.

To anyone who has ever been the unhappy recipient of a red letter in a small brown envelope, the news that even the former First Lady of the Philippines is unable to settle her electricity bill may offer a crumb of comfort. But uniquely, it will not be merely the fish fingers that spoil when Imelda's deep freeze is disconnected; the late President himself will feel the heat under his starched collar.

Since the deposed dictator's death in 1986, he has enjoyed presidential repose in a glass coffin beneath the soft lights of a bespoke mausoleum, in which the cool temperature is carefully monitored, so as to maintain his Excellency's excellence for future generations of Filipinos to enjoy.

But life after death does not come cheap. In fact, the Ilocos Norte Electric Co-operative, which supplies power to the mausoleum, in the grounds of the family mansion at Batac – Marcos's birthplace – estimates that seven years' immortality comes to about \$214,500 (including tax).

Trouble is, Imelda's a bit strapped just now. And with

the billions her husband stole from the nation (and gave to his friends in Geneva for safe-keeping) tied up in an endless cycle of legal actions involving several jurisdictions, the lady's financial embarrassment is not likely to be swiftly resolved.

As the deadline for payment expired yesterday, Rommies Pascual, president of the power co-operative, said: "We have given them [the Marcos family] enough time to pay their bills. We are trying our best to talk to Mrs Marcos but she does not seem interested to settle the problem."

"This is an ultimatum," he added firmly. Meanwhile, Mrs Marcos, who returned to the Philippines after her husband's death and was later elected a congresswoman, was not available for comment. An aide simply said she was "out of town".

It is not the first time that Mrs Marcos has been left reaching for the candles. Electricity to her mansion was interrupted in April last year, when the family failed to pay arrears dating from before their sudden departure for exile in Hawaii in 1986. But it was restored after several days when a son-in-law made partial payment.

On that occasion, however, the power co-operative spared the mausoleum, in deference to the town's "favourite son" following the emotional pleas of local government officials, still loyal to the old regime.

Adam Leigh

Stars shine out in tribute to charming Tinker

The London Palladium was packed yesterday as the theatre industry paid tribute to the famous *Daily Mail* critic, Jack Tinker, who died last year.

It is a measure of Tinker's personal charm that his sudden death from a heart attack last year at the age of 58 was mourned not just by his readers but by the actors he wrote about and his rivals, who have just posthumously voted him Critic of the Year.

The packed house was filled with faces from Fleet Street and show business and countless *Daily Mail* readers. Jack in *Review* was assembled in haste by Tinker's friend Cameron Mackintosh and was a sticky produced two-hour anthology of show tunes and tributes. The proceeds went to The British Epilepsy Association (Tinker's daughter Charlotte died during an epileptic attack at the age of 24).

Tinker would have fought to get a ticket. Dora Bryan sang "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend".

The audience squealed with delight at the 73 year old's high kicks.

Dame Judi Dench, deadpan in a pink dirndl and bad blonde wig, joined Brendan O'Hea in a comic rendition of "You are 16 going on 17" from *The Sound of Music*. Her fellow theatrical dame, Barry Humphries, gave his version of Sonheim's "The Ladies Who Lunch".

The afternoon's highlight was



an extract from the Royal National Theatre's *Gypsies and Dolls*. Theatre critics joined in with the revivalist "Sir Down You're Rocking the Boat". Sir David English in his closing speech insisted that none of them would be replacing Jack Tinker. "A hard act to follow, he became as big a star as anyone he wrote about. He was romantic about the theatre but never sentimental."

Tinker's strength as a critic, aside from his skills as a writer, lay in his almost total identification with his readers' tastes. This unerring ability to understand what they would love and hate earned him their affection and their loyalty. A lot of people love the theatre but the show in Tinker's honour at the Palladium proved that it actually loved him back.

Louise Levine

City firm denies Horlick rumour

A fund-management company yesterday denied reports that Nicola Horlick, the former City high-flyer, was joining them as an employee.

Ely Fund Managers, which controls about £250m of investors' money, said it had no plans to employ Ms Horlick.

One of the company's directors, Nick Bancroft, said yesterday that no discussions had taken place with her. "We have not talked to her and she has not talked to us. I've not met her and I don't think anybody else here has either," said Mr Bancroft. "The first we knew about this was when we read reports this morning."

The message was the same from a similarly named City firm, Ely Place Investments. A spokesman denied any knowledge of a deal involving Ms Horlick joining them. "I've only met her once and that was at a presentation and we did not discuss jobs," he said.

Ms Horlick was dubbed "Superwoman" for her ability to juggle her high-flying job as pensions-fund manager at the City bank, Morgan Grenfell, with her role as the mother of five children.

She was ousted from the bank over allegations – which she denies – that she tried to lure her team of staff to a rival fund manager. She hit the headlines after inviting the media to join her as she confronted her bosses at Morgan Grenfell over her election from the company.

Ms Horlick could not be contacted yesterday.

briefing

EDUCATION

Children's achievements likely to mirror their parents

A mother's education is a powerful indicator of her children's likely educational achievements, new research suggests. If a mother's highest qualification is an O-level, then her child has only a 12 per cent probability of gaining a university degree, but if the mother is a graduate, the likelihood of her son or daughter following suit is 67 per cent, according to a study by John Ermisch, Professor of Economics Essex university economics professor.

The link is particularly clear between the achievements of mothers and daughters, Professor Ermisch found. His research, published in a paper titled *Family Matters*, also found no evidence to suggest that having a mother in employment when a child is 14 in any way reduces educational attainment. Controversial research featured in a *Times* programme last month suggested children whose mothers worked full-time suffered educationally. By contrast, Professor Ermisch found that having a working mother may even increase the odds that the child goes on to A-levels and beyond.

Family Matters, John Ermisch, *Essex Centre for Economic Policy Research*, Tel: 0171 875 2900.

Louise Ward

WEATHER

Threat of drought ebbs away

The threat of drought receded as a wet and extremely windy February blew itself out yesterday. Reservoirs are mostly nearly full – as they should be at this time of year – and groundwater levels have at last begun to rise slowly. Rainfall in England and Wales was more than 38 per cent above the long-term average for the shortest month, following one of the driest Januaries in a record stretching back nearly 300 years.

Rainfall over the six months from September – the period in which the country's water supplies are replenished – has been 80 per cent of the long term average.

This February has seen three weeks of strong winds, with depression after depression sweeping in from the west. The Meteorological Office said it was the most tempestuous period since the start of 1990, when there was the second of the two Great Storms of recent memory. This time, the fastest gust recorded in the north was at Lewis in the Western Isles (101mph on 19 February) and, in the south, at Lee on Solent, Hants (90mph on 24 February).

Nicholas Schoon



AIDS

Death toll falls in US for first time

Giving fresh hope in the battle against Aids, the numbers of deaths from the disease fell significantly in the US during the first half of 1996, for the first time since it was first detected in 1981.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta reported that deaths from Aids fell by roughly 12 per cent over the six-month period. The decline was registered in all regions of the country, although its extent varied between different ethnic groups. Deaths among whites fell by 21 per cent, for example, but only by 2 per cent among African Americans.

The drop, which compared with a startling 30 per cent decline recently reported by New York City for the whole of 1996, was attributed to various factors, including the recent introduction of promising new drugs called protease inhibitors. Experts also cited improved AIDS awareness programmes and improved access to care for sufferers of the disease.

President Clinton welcomed the figures, but added: "It is also clear that the Aids epidemic is not over." David Usborne, New York

HOME AFFAIRS

Inspector warns on jail cuts

The Chief Inspector of Prisons has attacked proposed cuts in funding at a jail, which he said are "unacceptable" and will result in inmates being locked in their cells for almost 24 hours a day.

Sir David Ramsbottom argued that this would prevent inmates being rehabilitated and learning new skills to stop them reoffending on their release. His outspoken report follows a visit to Gloucester prison, which houses both young offenders and adults. He said the jail faced a cut in running costs of 15 per cent by April 2000.

"It is quite unacceptable for a modern prison to find itself in the position where, by the end of the century most prisoners will be locked in their cells all the time save for small periods on exercise and a little association," he said.

Paul Cavasino, chairman of the Penal Affairs Consortium, commented: "The bleak regime ... would make it impossible to rehabilitate prisoners. It would turn them out of prison much more embittered and more confirmed in criminal attitudes than when they went in."

Jason Bennetto

ROYAL MAIL

It's quicker to stick than lick

Self-adhesive stamps are to go on sale in Scotland and Northern Ireland in March on a six-month trial, Royal Mail said yesterday. But they are unlikely to be bought by the public during the trial period, as they are being sold in rolls of 100. If they prove successful, they could go on sale throughout the UK to business and domestic customers.

Royal Mail says it is targeting small and medium-sized firms in Scotland with the message, "It's quick to stick". Alex Gibb, Royal Mail's general manager for Scotland, said: "This is probably one of the biggest changes to British stamps since the Penny Black was introduced more than 150 years ago."



NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD			
Austria	£5.00	Italy	£5.00
Belgium	£5.00	Netherlands	£4.50
Canada	£5.00	Spain	£5.00
Cyprus	£5.00	Sweden	£5.00
Denmark	£5.00	Switzerland	£5.00
France	£5.00	USA	£5.00
Germany	£5.00		
Greece	£5.00		
Ireland	£5.00		
Japan	£5.00		
Portugal	£5.00		
South Africa	£5.00		
Sweden	£5.00		
Switzerland	£5.00		
USA	£5.00		

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

INDEPENDENT ABROAD

RADIO 3. BREAKING NEW SOUND BARRIERS.

sounding the

CENTURY

FROM NOW UNTIL THE END OF THE CENTURY, RADIO 3 HIGHLIGHTS THE COMPOSERS WHO REFLECT THE VITALITY AND RANGE OF 20TH CENTURY MUSIC. 'SOUNDING THE CENTURY' CONTINUES WITH THE CBSO, CONDUCTED BY SIR SIMON RATTLE, PERFORMING MUSIC BY BERIO, LUTOSLAWSKI AND MESSIAEN. WEDNESDAY MARCH 5TH AT 7.30PM. LIVE ON RADIO 3.



هكذا من الأصل

So that was London fashion week. But after all the swagger, who will wear the clothes?



A small army of buyers are now deciphering the trends that will fill shops in autumn

Melanie Rickay

Amid all the glitz, glamour and endless hype of London Fashion Week, which ended yesterday, there have been clothes for real women that will make their way into the shops this autumn. Among them are those designed by Alexander McQueen, the maverick couturier for Givenchy, and John Rocha, the Dublin based, Hong Kong-born designer whose clothes are pictured. Every day you will have seen photographs like these in newspapers and on television: but are these clothes what we will really be wearing come September?

Many of the clothes – particularly the more extravagant items designed to catch the eyes of the photographers – do not make it on to shop rails. Be-

ween now and autumn an intricate series of events will determine what will be "the fashion", and what will not. Rita Britton, from designer emporium Pollyanna in Barnsley, was in London all week buying the clothes her working customers in Yorkshire will want. "What people who read fashion pages don't realise is that half the clothes shown don't even go into production."

A typical fashion show will have between 300 and 1,000 guests. Half of the guests will be press, and will either write about the clothes, or use them in fashion shoots. These people will determine The Trends. The other half of the audience will be fashion buyers from stores all over the world, who determine what we actually buy by shaping The Trends into real clothes.



Buyers are the designers' bread and butter. Without them, clothing like McQueen's and Rocha's, for example, would remain a fantasy. As well as these two designers, Lynette White, fashion buyer for Liberty, is responsible for buying Hussein Chalayan and Helmut Lang.

For her, the catwalk presentation is incidental, the real decisions will be made in the showroom. "The amount we

buy from a particular designer depends on their performance last year, and we only take risks with new designers if they are exceptional," she said. Yesterday she was writing orders for Rocha's collection which showed on Wednesday. "His clothes sold very well for us last autumn," she explained.

When a buyer selects clothing it must be wearable and sellable, but not necessarily commercial. You will not find an

Alexander McQueen dress in the shops that consists of just a collar with tassels to cover the breasts. Nor will you find a fuchsia pink faux snakeskin jacket by Antonio Berardi. Even though they were shown on the catwalk, they are unrealistic. However, McQueen bumper trousers have sold at Liberty, as have intricate coats by Yohji Yamamoto. The result is something of a compromise, Lynette White said: "We don't aim to



F-i-t-f-fashion? Far left, an offering from Alexander McQueen that might actually reach the high street and, above, one of his creations that almost certainly will not. Quick change: one of Vivienne Westwood's models, centre, is helped into her next outfit during one of the shows. Photographs: Ben Elwes

buy watered down fashion that people will easily understand. Our aim is to educate the customer, to give them the ideas and opportunities to wear exciting clothes.

Rocha admitted that he was not a good salesman, but with his annual turnover now approaching £5m and selling to 20 countries, he has hit on a formula. "My designs come from the heart, and fortunately the buying public understands what I'm trying to say. He knows that what he does essentially is to 'put clothes on backs'. But they are truly beautiful clothes.

McQueen's clothes are aimed at a different customer, so Lynette White takes a different approach. You will not see McQueen g-string denim shorts or peak-shouldered

breast-baring garments like the ones shown on Thursday in Liberty. She will be buying McQueen's belted cowhide coats, cut-out leather dresses, skin-tight jeans and sharply embroidered suits. "Things are going more and more 'streety'," she said. "McQueen's show was a breath of fresh air, and proved that it's not important to have the essential black tailored suit anymore. That is not what people want from McQueen."

So, next time you see a model on the catwalk wearing a seemingly unwearable outfit, remember, there is an army of people out there whose sole aim is to translate what they see on the catwalk into something you can wear, and that is true purpose of London Fashion Week, despite all the hype.

IN TOMORROW'S INDEPENDENT

Five great sections for the very best in Sunday journalism



JACK THE LAD

"In a relationship, the woman has the power that comes from man's inability to think about anything but women..."

Hollywood's biggest rascal, Jack Nicholson, talks exclusively to David Thomson

PLUS:

THE NEXT CHANCELLOR?

The private life of Gordon Brown

MUSSEL POWER

Secrets from the new Belgo cookbook

TICK-TOCK

Do men have a biological clock?

THE CRUNCH

Reports and analysis from today's crucial England v France Five Nations' Championship match at Twickenham

THE SUNDAY PREVIEW

Full seven-day terrestrial and satellite TV listings

IT IS... ARE YOU?

A soldier's life is glinting in the bottom of the glass

The Army intends to revive the Napoleonic art of luring new recruits over a pint in the pub.

For the first time in more than 200 years soldiers will be sent out with a brief to enlist young men between 18 and 26 by buying them a beer over a chat in their local.

Over 300 soldiers from the 1st Battalion Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment will be involved in the novel recruitment campaign which begins next Saturday.

They will work in teams of four and go armed with a kitty to buy likely recruits a drink.

The regiment has targeted 88 pubs popular with young people in 15 Midland towns which form their recruiting heartland. The towns include Derby, Nottingham, Worcester, Redditch, Burton, Newark and Chesterfield.

The three-week recruitment drive has been approved by the Ministry of Defence and is being closely monitored by other regiments, who may take up the idea if it's a success.

"We are reverting to the old style recruiting methods of skimming used 200 years ago when barracks didn't exist and soldiers were billeted in inns which were a very fruitful source of recruits," said Major John Cotterill who is in command of the operation.

"In those days soldiers led by a recruiting sergeant would buy boys a pint of foaming ale and leave a king's shilling in the bottom of the glass."

"Once the prospective recruit had finished his pint he was deemed to have accepted the king's shilling or enlistment bounty and the next thing they knew they had been whisked away on a troop ship to fight Napoleon," said Major Cotterill.



Offering the King's shilling: A recruiting sergeant 'tempta' a village yokel in 1855. Mary Evans Picture Library

"We will not be kidnapping anyone this time. The idea is not to ply people with drink, mock them over the head and carry them away."

"Our teams will go into pubs wearing uniforms and seek to engage boys of their own age in conversation," he added. "They will chat and seek to convince people this is the life for them and they ought to join their local regiment."

He went on: "It won't be a matter of soldiers walking into pubs and saying 'Right the drinks are on the house'. They won't be distributing largesse to all and sundry."

"I suspect they will be buying people a pint of beer because it's cheaper than whisky and you wouldn't get so much time to talk to a bloke drinking a short," Major Cotterill said. The project is being financed

by profits made from a snack bar the regiment ran during their six-month stay in Bosnia last year.

The regiment – motto "Firm" – was founded in 1694 and many soldiers are being sent to recruit in pubs in their home towns.

The regiment contains 700 soldiers and requires 100 new recruits every year. Officers are hoping this and other projects during the next three weeks will unearth all the recruits they need for the next year.

The armoured infantry battalion is based in Tidworth, Wiltshire and soldiers will spend much of this year training in Canada.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: "This is obviously a very inventive, localised recruiting campaign which may or may not work."

"It will certainly keep the Army in the public eye in the area from which that regiment raises its manpower."

The battalion performs a ceremony unique to the Army on 20 September each year. A private is allowed to carry the regimental colours to mark the battle of Alma during the Crimean war in 1854 when every officer and sergeant in the regiment was either killed or wounded and the regimental colours were carried into battle by Private Keenan.

The regiment was the first in the British Army to cross the River Seine during the advance across France in 1944.

The last soldier to be wounded in Northern Ireland before the 1994 IRA ceasefire, Lance Corporal Nobby Clarke, was serving with the regiment in Crossmaglen.

Lucky God is one of the chosen

David Osborne
New York

If God has ever considered trading the riches of Heaven for those of Earth, He may have struck lucky. The Almighty has been chosen by American Family Publishers, a sweepstakes organisation, as a potential winner of \$11m (£7m).

In what appears to have been a case of extreme computer eccentricity, a letter of notification was sent by Family Publishers earlier this week to a small Pentecostal church in rural Florida. Rather than being for its Pas-

tor, Bill Brock, however, the letter was addressed directly to God.

"God, we've been searching for you," it declared, insisting that He – alongside millions of others all across the land, including myself – had been "positively identified" as being in the running for the multi-million payoff.

Like most sane people, Pastor Brock would have normally thrown the envelope away unopened. It was only when his youth counsellor spotted the address that he saved it.

The letter inside, adorned

with the usual quasi-official seals and stickers, went on: "What an incredible fortune there would be for God! Could you imagine the looks you'd get from your neighbors. But don't just sit there, God!"

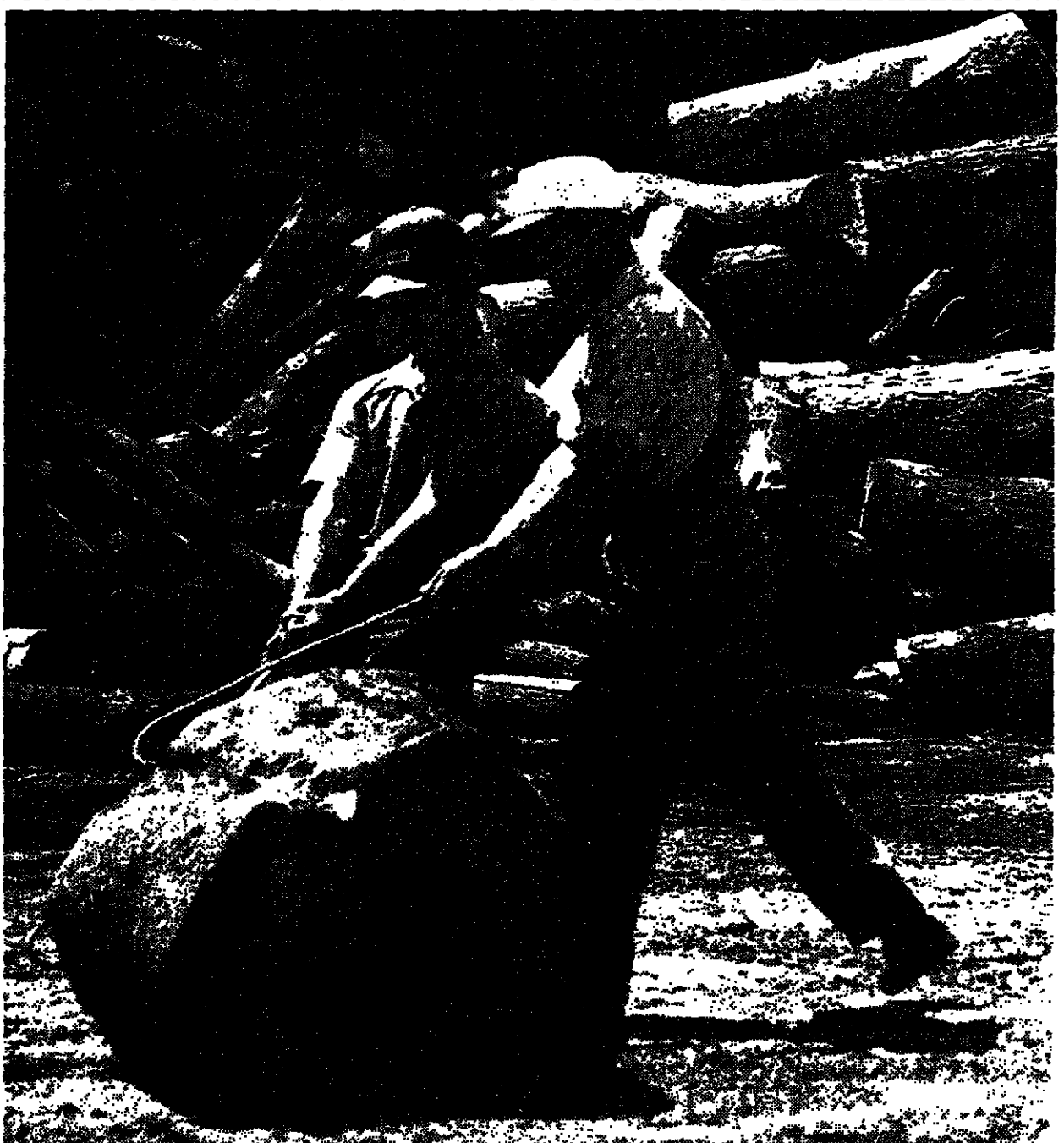
Pastor Brock is holding on to the letter. "I want to consult with my church board, before doing anything crazy," he said yesterday. However, he says that if God were selected, he would play the Almighty for the sweepstakes people.

"I believe in God, but I don't believe in sweepstakes," said Pastor Brock, whose church is

the Bushnell Assembly of God north of Tampa. "But if they turn up at the church door with \$11m then I will believe in sweepstakes too."

Of course, responding to the letter would entail God giving something back to Family Publishers. In any case, the *quid pro quo* was agreeing to subscribe to a motley range of weekly publications I had never heard of.

There was nothing on the list likely to be of much use in heaven. But then, of course, we know now that God does not live in Heaven, after all, but in Bushnell, Florida.



If you'd like to know more about our unique whiskey, write to us for a free booklet at the Jack Daniel Distillery, Lynchburg, Tennessee 37352 USA.

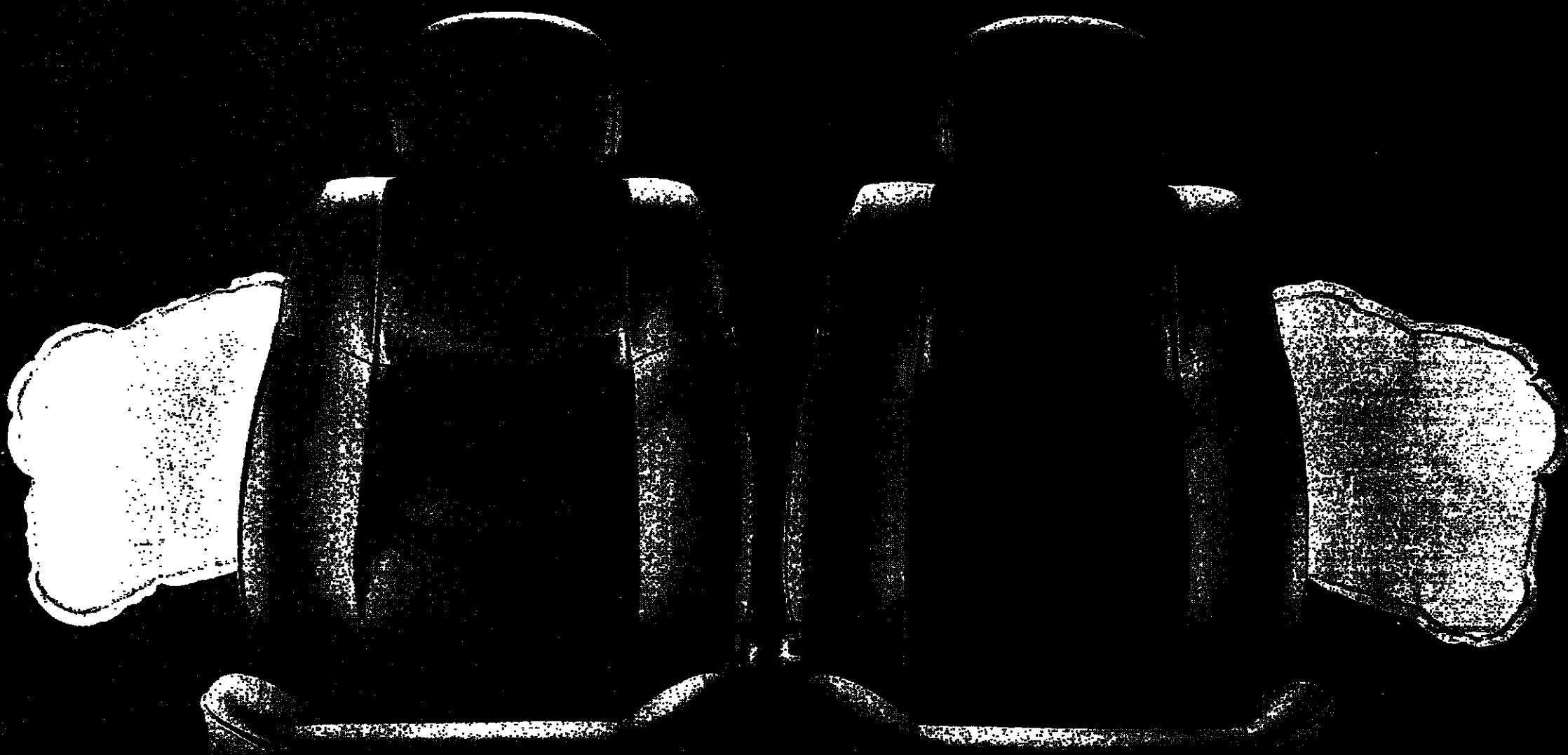
AT JACK DANIEL DISTILLERY we're a hard-working bunch who believe in doing a job right.

Two of our rickers are coming to grips with a big stump of hard maple. Soon, they'll strip it and burn it to the charcoal we use for smoothing our whiskey. And nothing does more for Jack Daniel's than this unique charcoal mellowing process does. If you think most distillers don't go to this trouble, well, you're right. None do. But after a sip of Jack Daniel's, we believe, you'll recognize the rewards of hard work.



JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

WE NOW SELL LIFE INSURANCE DOOR TO DOOR.



BECAUSE MORE PEOPLE ARE INJURED IN SIDE IMPACTS than in any other type of collision, side-impact airbags are now available on all Vectras. And that comes on top of an already impressive list of safety features. Like side-impact beams built into each door, reinforced door pillars and sills as well as special shock absorbing door padding. The airbags themselves are integrated into the seat frames so that they remain in the most effective place no matter what your driving position.

And inflation with the 12 litres of non-toxic gas is almost instantaneous. (Within 10 milliseconds of a collision). If you'd like to know more about our particular style of life insurance call 0800 455 466. Before somebody really does knock your door.

THE VECTRA FROM VAUXHALL

DRIVER AND PASSENGER * OF AIRBAG PACK * ARE AVAILABLE AS OPTIONAL EXTRA AT AN ADDITIONAL COST OF £135 FOR VECTRA CDX, AND £450 INCLUDING PASSENGER AIRBAG FOR ALL OTHER MODELS. WWW.VAUXHALL.CO.UK

هكذا من الأصل

£1.7m
after
wall
tra

A

£1.7m fines after ferry walkway tragedy

Michael Streater

A judge yesterday fined four companies a record total of £1.7m over the collapse of a ferry walkway which left six people dead and seven others badly injured.

Two Swedish firms who designed, built and installed the walkway at the Port of Ramsgate in Kent were fined a total of £1m, the port £200,000 and Lloyd's Register of Shipping, which gave the device a safety certificate, £500,000 - the first criminal conviction in its 237-year history.

The fines, which follow conviction on 17 February after a four-week trial, pave the way for the injured and relatives of the dead to sue for massive civil damages, likely to total hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Richard Scorer, a solicitor representing a number of the claimants said later: "Compensation claims have already been lodged. I'm confident they will be settled, particularly in the light of the fines and verdict."

Passing sentence in the Old Bailey, Mr Justice Clarke said: "This was a tragic accident which should never have happened. I hope that nothing like it will ever happen again."

The previous largest fine for a charge under the Health and Safety at Work Act was £750,000, imposed in 1988 following three fatal accidents at an oil refinery. Two Britons were among the six passengers who died when a steel pin holding the walkway in place came loose on 14 September 1994, as hundreds of passengers were boarding the Prins Filip ferry from Ramsgate to Ostend.

Steven Jones, 34, from Manchester, and Jason Dudley, 42, from Epping, Essex, died, as well as two French tourists, one Belgian and an Italian. Seven other passengers were seriously injured as more than a

dozen people plunged 30ft on to a steel platform below.

The Swedish companies, FEAB and FKAB were guilty of "gross errors" of design, said the judge. There was also "gross negligence" on the part of Lloyd's Register - or rather its employees. Port of Ramsgate Ltd, he said, must share responsibility for the collapse of the walkway, although "much less than in the case of the other defendants".

A spokesman for the Health and Safety Executive, which brought the prosecutions, said later that it was "satisfied" with the sentences - which it hoped would act as a warning.

The Swedish firms, who on legal advice were not represented in court, cannot legally be forced to pay the fines, because they have no UK assets, but it will bar them from trading here until they do.

Patrick O'Farrell, chairman of Lloyd's Register said later: "I am personally extremely sorry that this dreadful accident happened. We wish to express our sympathies to those injured and to the families of those who died."

The Port of Ramsgate Ltd later said it was considering an appeal against sentence and conviction. "The company does not feel it was culpable for the tragedy which occurred in 1994," said a spokeswoman.

Port Ramsgate Ltd and the Swedish companies had denied a Health and Safety Executive charge of failing to ensure the safety of passengers. Lloyd's Register of Shipping had pleaded guilty to one charge brought under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Port Ramsgate Ltd was also found guilty of a lesser charge under the Docks Regulations Act 1983.

The defendants were ordered jointly to pay costs totalling £723,500.



Digging for victory: Campaigner Gabriel Mules at the entrance to one of the tunnels excavated by Victorian entrepreneur Joseph Williamson, right. Photographs courtesy the Liverpool Echo



Victorian Swampy challenges the planners

Ian Barrell

A subterranean labyrinth excavated by a nineteenth century forerunner of Swampy, the road protester, is under threat from a planned housing development.

The extraordinary network of tunnels beneath the streets of central Liverpool was created by Joseph Williamson, an eccentric philanthropist.

A tobacco baron with a bizarre fetish for tunnelling, he spent 35 years hollowing out immense underground caverns and earning the nickname "The Mole of Edge Hill".

One elaborately-created underground banquet hall is 80ft long and 40ft high, containing entrances to 25 tunnels, some of which extend for miles beneath the city. Now the Mole, like Swampy, is at war with developers, albeit posthumously.

Liverpool City Council has approved plans to build 21 student homes on a site immediately above the main entrances to the labyrinth.

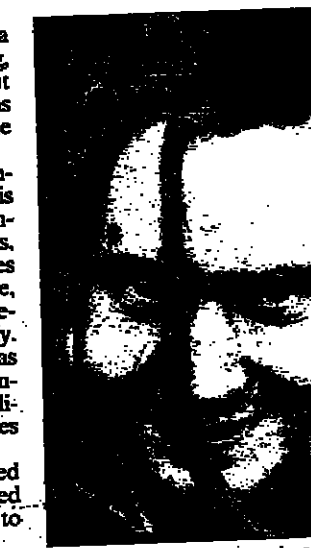
The decision has bewildered local historians, who had hoped to turn the area into a shrine to Williamson's tunnel mania.

The purpose of the burrowing has never been established.

Williamson's obituary in the *Liverpool Mercury* in 1840 concluded: "No earthly use can be assigned for these catacombs."

But now local people believe that the tunnels, cut from solid rock and supported by brick arches, lead to a brighter future of new jobs and tourist revenue.

Some 200 people, who attended a meeting last week of the newly-formed Friends of



Swampy: Runway protest Photograph: Peter Macdonald

Williamson's Tunnels group, argue that the labyrinth could become a major attraction.

It would be a fitting legacy for the underground honeycomb, whose excavation between 1806 and 1840 provided well-paid work during the slump after the Napoleonic wars.

So grateful were the local families, many of whom were also Williamson's tenants, that they

often referred to the eccentric as "The King of Edge Hill".

Williamson's constituency is once again in need of help. The once leafy district now has associations with a different underworld, where Liverpool's armed gangs settle their scores and police unearth caches of illegally-held automatic weapons.

Williamson's once splendid home in Mason Street is now a

derelict garage. Not that he was ostentatious. He lived like a troglodyte at the rear of his house, sleeping in a cavern and using a cellar as his living room.

His burly figure was a familiar sight on the streets of Liverpool in a battered beaver hat, patched brown coat, corduroy breeches and hobnail boots. Nevertheless, the Prince

of Wales, on a visit to the city, described him as "the only gentleman in Liverpool".

Williamson had come from humble origins as the son of a poor Warrington farmer who came to Liverpool at the age of 11 to seek his fortune.

He found work with a tobacco company, which he took charge of years later after marrying the daughter of the boss. The tobacco trade brought him great riches which he invested in his excavations. Historians estimate that the network of tunnels cost Williamson £100,000, equivalent to £25m today.

Local architect Dave Head said: "The site is worth far more as a tourist attraction than as student accommodation."

But Carol Young, one of the architects planning the student development, said that a rafted design would protect the tunnels from damage. "The fears are unfounded," she said.

... while the real one digs in

The environmental protester "Swampy", whose underground sit-in defied bailiffs during the A30 by-pass protests in south Devon, yesterday pledged to help build a bigger network of tunnels to try to block an airport's second runway.

Campaigners claim that the £172 million scheme for Manchester Airport, approved by John Gummer, the Secretary of State for the Environment, is unnecessary and will blight the countryside.

As Swampy, alias Daniel Hooper, 23, arrived at the site near Macclesfield, Cheshire, he said: "This is pollution for profit and I am determined to stop it. 'I will be here for as long

as it takes."

He said protesters were planning to tunnel under the water table to foil attempts to divert them. Work clearing the site is expected to start in the spring.

Police have warned the campaigners that their tunnels are potentially lethal because of seeping methane gas.

He said protesters were planning to tunnel under the water table to foil attempts to divert them. Work clearing the site is expected to start in the spring.

Police have warned the campaigners that their tunnels are potentially lethal because of seeping methane gas.

"At just £25 per month, tax-free saving for a rainy day is easy."

Just call and ask for our new Direct PEP."

With our new Direct Household Name PEP you can make a tax-free investment in some of the best known companies around such as British Airways, Rolls Royce and Vespene just £25 per month. And it's easy - just call us now on the number below.

Phone lines are open 8am-8pm Monday-Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) and 10am-2pm Saturday.



Midland Bank

Member HSBC Group

CALL FREE: 0800 277 377

Midland Bank plc is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority. We only sell our own life assurance, pensions and unit trusts. As with any investment relating to stocks and shares, the prices of units and the income from them can go down as well as up and they may fall below the amount originally invested. Free of tax means free of Income and Capital Gains Tax. Tax legislation and practice could change in the future. Calls may be monitored or recorded. 80/85

Less Angeles

Our new Business and First Class afares, Heathrow to Los Angeles, are now lower than any other airline. For more information call 0181 990 9900 or see your local travel agent.

UNITED AIRLINES
Best Transatlantic Airline 1997 (Executive Travel Magazine).

*Offer ends 31st June 1997.

now in of then high bad ious

S

ar

segment at year awards

r-suited reading exchange current ses over e office is spent

ling and it to re- is. Then ined by i. Finally r's gown g which. to be at "Come : shouts, oured in he gold id its six- y advcr- agency r Britvic, ur Vote ok gold ion bud- seconds ries. TBWA's y Trevor possibly stretched

ld award a for its iced bus o strong

ngo won

r u d y h f

Only Currys bring you all this

TELEVISIONS SAVE UP TO £100

MATSUI 14" Teletext TV with Remote Control 34cm visible screen size Model 14T11. Was £159.99. SALE PRICE £149.99	PANASONIC 25" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 59cm visible screen size Super HiCAM Stereo Sound. Model 25MD1. In-store Price £499.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	SONY 25" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 59cm visible screen size HiCAM Stereo Sound. Model 25T1. Was £599.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER
MATSUI 20" Teletext TV with Remote Control 51cm visible screen size Teletext for access to information services Model 20T1. Was £219.99. SALE PRICE £189.99	SONY 14" Teletext TV with Remote Control 34cm visible screen size Fastest for easy access to all Teletext services Model 14T1. Was £199.99. In-store Price £209.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	SONY 14" Teletext TV with Remote Control 34cm visible screen size Fastest for easy access to all Teletext services Model 14T1. Was £199.99. In-store Price £209.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER
THOMSON 21" Teletext TV with Remote Control 51cm visible screen size Model 21T1. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	MATSUI 21" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 51cm visible screen size Fastest for easy access to Teletext services Model 21T1. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	BUSH 25" HiCAM Stereo TV with Teletext 66cm visible screen size Teletext for access to information services Model 25T1. Was £399.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER
SANYO 25" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 59cm visible screen size Model 25T1. Was £499.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	HITACHI 25" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 59cm visible screen size Model 25T1. Was £499.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	TOP BRAND VIDEOS SAVE UP TO A TOTAL OF £60

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST ELECTRICAL RETAILER'S

SALE

LAST 3 DAYS!

MUST END MONDAY

UP TO £140

ON A RANGE OF LAUNDRY AND REFRIGERATION APPLIANCES

BUY NOW PAY 18 MONTHS LATER

UP TO 18 MONTHS INTEREST FREE OPTION*

ON A RANGE OF TOP BRAND PRODUCTS

LAUNDRY & DISHWASHERS SAVE UP TO £150

SERVIS 1000 Spin Automatic 1000 Spin Automatic Model 1000. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	BOSCH 1000 Spin Automatic 1000 Spin Automatic Model 1000. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	CANDY 1000 Spin Automatic 1000 Spin Automatic Model 1000. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER
CREDA 1000 Spin Automatic 1000 Spin Automatic Model 1000. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	HOOVER 1000 Spin Automatic 1000 Spin Automatic Model 1000. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	WHITE KNIGHT 1000 Spin Automatic 1000 Spin Automatic Model 1000. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER
HOTPOINT 1000 Spin Automatic 1000 Spin Automatic Model 1000. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	AEG 1000 Spin Automatic 1000 Spin Automatic Model 1000. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	CREDA 1000 Spin Automatic 1000 Spin Automatic Model 1000. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER

TOP BRAND VIDEOS SAVE UP TO A TOTAL OF £60	MATSUI 21" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 51cm visible screen size Model 21T1. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	JVC 21" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 51cm visible screen size Model 21T1. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER
MATSUI 21" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 51cm visible screen size Model 21T1. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	JVC 21" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 51cm visible screen size Model 21T1. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER	MATSUI 21" HiCAM Stereo TV with Fastest 51cm visible screen size Model 21T1. Was £249.99. BUY NOW PAY 6 MONTHS LATER

CANDY 9.8 cu.ft. Fridge Freezer 9.8 cu.ft. Fridge Freezer Model 9.8. Was £399.99. In-store Price £299.99.	HOOPER 9.8 cu.ft. Fridge Freezer 9.8 cu.ft. Fridge Freezer Model 9.8. Was £399.99. In-store Price £299.99.	HOOPER 9.8 cu.ft. Fridge Freezer 9.8 cu.ft. Fridge Freezer Model 9.8. Was £399.99. In-store Price £299.99.
---	--	--

REFRIGERATION SAVE UP TO A TOTAL OF £140	NOVA SCOTIA 3.8 cu.ft. Chest Freezer 3.8 cu.ft. Chest Freezer Model 3.8. Was £199.99. In-store Price £149.99.	NOVA SCOTIA 3.8 cu.ft. Chest Freezer 3.8 cu.ft. Chest Freezer Model 3.8. Was £199.99. In-store Price £149.99.
--	---	---

LOWEST EVER PRICE	SALE PRICE £259.99	SAVE £30
--------------------------	----------------------------------	------------------------

GRUNDIG 4-Head HiCAM Video with VideoPlus 4-Head HiCAM Video with VideoPlus Model 4. Was £299.99. In-store Price £249.99.	AIWA 4-Head HiCAM Video with VideoPlus 4-Head HiCAM Video with VideoPlus Model 4. Was £299.99. In-store Price £249.99.	SALE PRICE £449.99
---	--	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £259.99	SAVE £140	SALE PRICE £259.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE £450	SALE PRICE £1149
--------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------------

SALE PRICE £799	SAVE £200	SALE PRICE £799
-------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------

SALE PRICE £269.99	SAVE £160	SALE PRICE £269.99
----------------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------------

SALE PRICE £1149	SAVE</
--------------------------------	------------------

WIRRAL AFTERMATH

Labour's lean machine beats teacups



Tony Blair with the victorious Labour candidate Ben Chapman. The slick campaign contrasted starkly with the shambolic 1983 campaign of Michael Foot (right)

Landslide that points to inevitable change

It now requires a leap of faith to predict anything other than a Labour landslide in the general election in two months' time. There is no hard evidence to suggest that, dramatic events apart, the Conservatives can avoid disaster.

If the 17 per cent swing to Labour since the 1992 election in Wirral South were repeated across the country, Tony Blair would win with a majority of 295 seats. This seems so fanciful that it is tempting to believe Michael Heseltine's claim that the voters of the Wirral took the chance to give the Government a "kicking", and that the decision will be very different in a few weeks' time when the voters there are choosing a government rather than sending a message to one.

But there is scant evidence of this from last time. In the Langbaurgh by-election before the 1992 general election, there was a 4 per cent swing to Labour. In the general election itself, the swing to Labour was just 2 per cent. So in five months, after the hard-hitting attack on Labour's "tax bombshell", John Major was able to pull back the swingometer by only two points. This time he has two months. Even if he can pull back two points, that would leave a swing to Labour of 15 per cent and a majority for Mr

Blair of 230 seats. Paradoxically, there is more hope for the Tories in the message of the opinion polls. The polls in Wirral South were all within a point or two of the result.

If we take the average of this month's national polls, they suggest a swing to Labour of only 12.5 per cent since the last election. "We have yet to hear a Tory politician say: 'Never mind real votes in real ballot boxes, look at the opinion polls.' But perhaps this is not surprising, because if the polls are right, Mr Blair would still win a 190-seat majority.

After this, the Tories begin to run out of excuses.

They cannot blame defeat on their supporters staying at home. The turnout of 73 per cent was high for a by-election. Nationally, the turnout at the last general election was 78 per cent (contrary to the common assumption of growing apathy, this was up from 75 per cent in 1987 and 73 per cent in 1983). And this cannot simply be put down to Labour's intensive telephone canvassing: they will be doing that too in key marginal seats in the general election, backed by a national campaign.

The only other hard evi-

dence about the mood of the electorate is the weekly trickle of data from local council by-elections. These were seized by the Tories late last year when they appeared to herald a recovery in their fortunes. But that has since faded, resembling what City analysts call a "dead cat bounce". The latest estimates of the parties' share of the votes in these contests, adjusted to take account of local circumstances, show Labour in the lead across the country by 18 per cent - much the same as the opinion polls.

So, in order to forecast even a Labour majority of fewer than 100 seats, we have to assume two things. One is that the voters of the Wirral will return in unprecedented numbers to the Tories in just nine weeks - even though, unlike in previous by-elections, they tell opinion pollsters they will do no such thing.

The other is that the national opinion polls are still getting it badly wrong, despite the changes made by all the polling companies since the debacle of 1992. They are unlikely to be as far out as they were in 1992.

But the final nail through the heart of Tory hopes is that, even if they were that far out, Mr Blair would still win with a majority of 80.

John Rentoul

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

The contrast between Labour's lean, mean election machine and the laid-back amateurism of the Conservatives in Wirral South can be measured in tea cups.

It became a habit for Les Byrom, the hapless Conservative candidate, to attend "house-meetings" with visiting Cabinet ministers. But it soon emerged that the invited guests were the party faithful, and that men such as the Secretary of State for Health, Stephen Dorrell, and the Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Portillo, were wasting time talking to the converted over tea and biscuits.

Over at Labour campaign headquarters, in a converted supermarket, the professional sense of purpose and direction were visibly humming under the overall command of Ian McCartney, MP for Macclesfield, a leading member of John Prescott's campaign team.

Mr McCartney was joined by David Hanson, MP for Delyn, a regional party official, David Evans, and a team that united party officials from around the country with local volunteers and party members in a tight-

ly-run unit.

Labour no longer flies by the seat of its pants. Little, if anything, is left to chance and no detail is too small.

When Tony Blair visited the Arrow Park Hospital with the party candidate, Ben Chapman, last Monday, there was a fat, fact-packed media briefing paper on the problems faced by the hospital trust, and even a

man carrying a cardboard sheath of four golfing umbrellas to protect the leader and his entourage in case it rained.

On the day the Speaker moved the by-election writ in the Commons, Mr Prescott was on hand to listen to a "live sound feed" of Betty Boothroyd at Westminster, to give the campaign its official launch.

This was all in stark contrast to the shambles of the Michael Foot campaign in 1983. Swamped wherever he went by crowds of schoolchildren and television crews, he wandered

WIRRAL SOUTH RESULT			
LABOUR-SWING FROM CONSERVATIVES			
Ben Chapman (Lab)	22,267	(59%)	
Les Byrom (Con)	14,123	(36%)	
Pat Gower (Lib Dem)	4,357	(10%)	
Lab total	40,747	(75%)	
Con total	13,512	(25%)	
Other	4,241	(7%)	
1992 C 28,596 (60.5%); majority 1,167			
1997 Lab 17,407 (34.6%); Lab gain 11,389 (73.1%)			
Other candidates			
Samuelson Anthony (SDP)	124		
Samuelson Anthony (Lib Dem)	49		
David Evans (Lab)	184		
Michael Gower (Conservative)	138		
Patricia Gower (Lib Dem)	52		
Anthony Hanson (Lab)	410		
David Hanson (Lab)	41		
David Hanson (Lab)	132		

They spent much of their time basking on about Labour's threat to local grammar schools, when Labour had identified other issues, such as health and crime, as more important in the mind of the electorate.

Yet when Mr Dorrell and the Home Secretary Michael Howard went to Wirral, they talked about grammar schools instead of their own areas of responsibility - health and crime.

Labour, which had carried out detailed surveys of the voters, both on the doorstep and through extensive telephone canvassing, already knew that the voters' concerns coincided with the party's five pledges: on hospital waiting lists; class sizes; youth unemployment; fast-track punishment for young offenders; tax, inflation and interest rates.

Those were the messages hammered home, and the concerns that were addressed with those voters who were identified as "switchers" - people of all ages and generations who were thinking, many for the first time in their lives, of moving from Tory to Labour.

As much effort was devoted to ensuring that Labour's core vote also turned out on the council estates. If the New Labour switchers were the icing, the old Labour hard core was the cake.

Mr Chapman, the new Labour MP, now has the daunting task of trying to maintain the momentum for another nine weeks. Having achieved the impossible, a swing of 17 per cent swing, on Thursday, he now needs the miracle of retaining the seat in May.

SAVINGS
SOLUTIONUP TO 7.35%^{p.a.} GUARANTEED

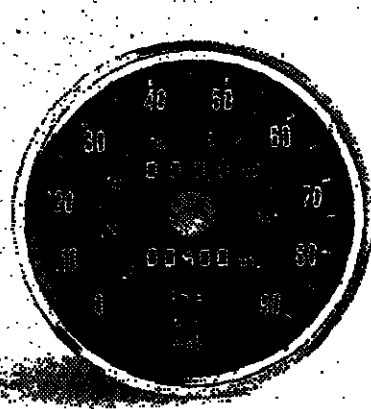
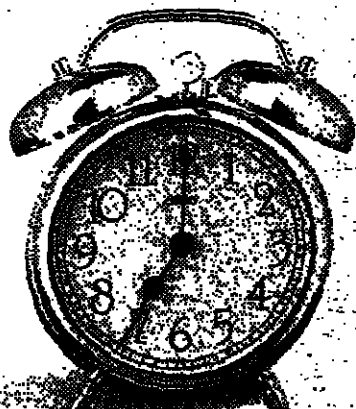
£2,500 MINIMUM INVESTMENT

1 OR 2 YEAR TERM

THE FIXED OPTIONS BOND

0800
100 801

(QUOTING REFERENCE A474B/13)

OR CALL INTO YOUR
LOCAL BRANCHCORK & KERRY.
BEAT THE CLOCK!SLEEP OVER
ARRIVING AT 7amSAVE OVER
400 MILES OF DRIVING

MIDWINTER RETURN
FROM
£155
CAR & FERRY ADULTS
Available March 1st - May 31st
Excluding Easter

For ferry passage, holiday brochure
and reservations, telephone

01792 - 456116

or contact your local travel agent



SWANSEA CORK FERRIES

Miles ahead of the the rest

127

7.35% p.a. gross payable on investment of £200,000 + invested for 2 years. Lines are open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and Saturday 9am to 1pm. To assist us in improving our service we may record or monitor all calls. This offer may be withdrawn at any time. No withdrawals or closure are permitted on the Fixed Options Bond 4th Edition in year 1. The Bond will mature on the first day of the following month either 1 or 2 years after opening (depending on the investment term chosen at outset). You may be able to register with us to receive interest gross; otherwise it will be paid net of income tax at the prescribed rate. See leaflet for full conditions. Abbey National and the Umbrella Couple symbol are trademarks of Abbey National plc, Abbey House, Baker Street, London NW1 6XL.

news

Thieves' horde of religious riches

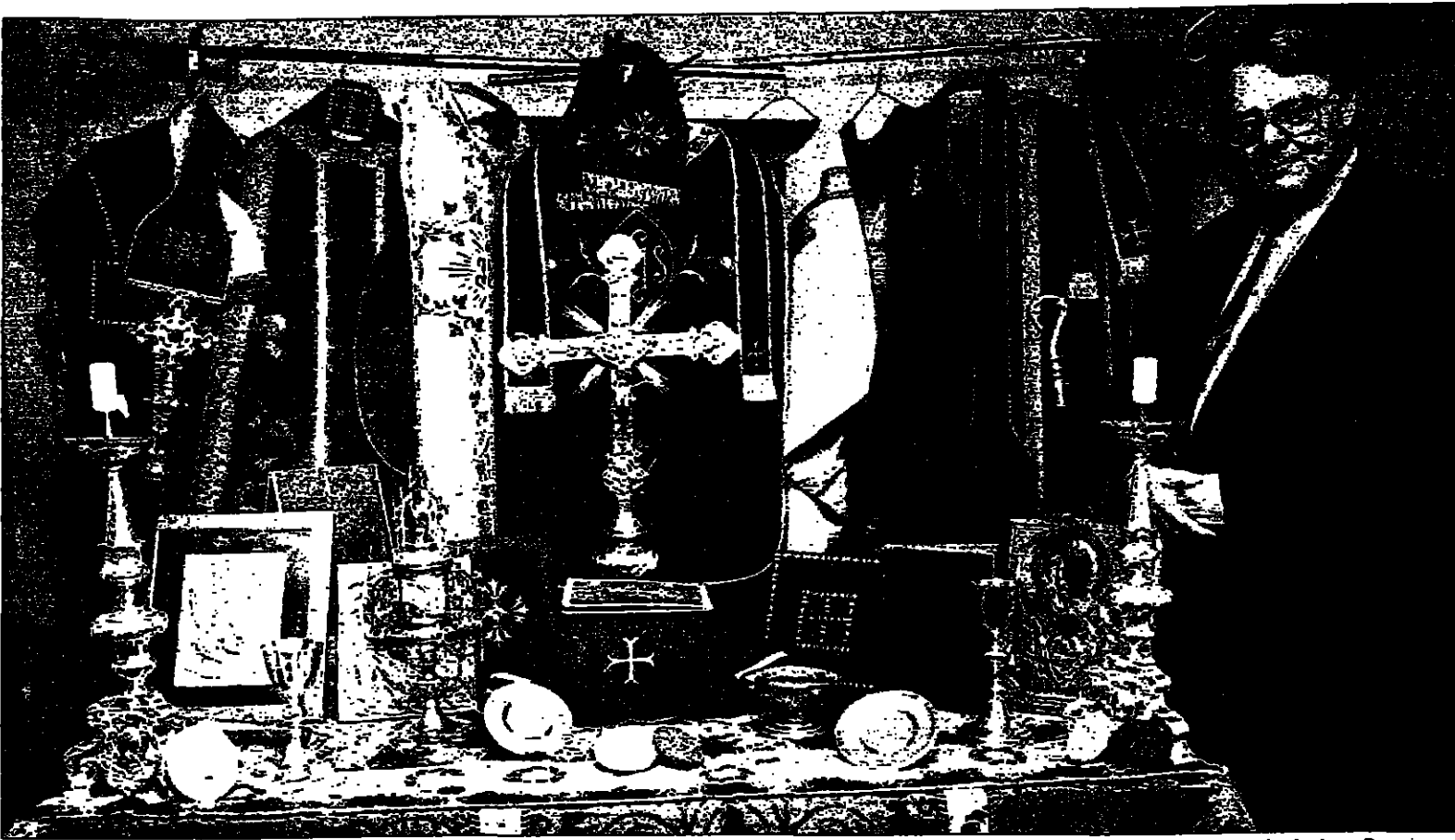
Matthew Brace

An Aladdin's Cave of altar crosses, candlesticks, communion cups and other religious property stolen from churches and cathedrals around the country has been found in a small north London flat.

Police said the one-bedroom flat was full of ecclesiastical artefacts, including a bishop's mitre from Westminster Cathedral. Elaborately embroidered velvet clerical hoods, stoles, copes and tunics are among the hoard discovered hidden in cupboards, wardrobes and a chest of drawers.

Also present in the small flat were tapestries, 18th century gold communion plates, paintings, Latin bibles, ancient seals, chalices, crucifixes, incense burners and altar banners.

Detective Constable Dave Hobart said: "There's enough religious property from this flat to stock several churches."



Holy hide: Det Con Dave Hobart with the hoard of church property recovered from a north London flat

Photograph: Andrew Dunsmore

BBC gets shot of its broadcast network

Christian Wolmar
Westminster Correspondent

The BBC lost the second B in its name yesterday when it sold its transmitter network to a private company for £244m and will no longer broadcast the programmes it makes.

The sale to Castle Transmission Services, a consortium headed by Houston-based Castle, means that in future the British Broadcasting Corporation will buy in transmission services. Another consequence of the sale, which took effect yesterday, is that the entire UK transmitter network will be in foreign hands, following the sale last year of the ITV system to the US-owned NTL.

Both the BBC and the Department of National Heritage expressed delight at the sale. The BBC is to use the proceeds to invest in providing its new digital television systems and said it would be buying in transmission services at a lower cost than it was paying previously.

BBC Deputy Director-General Bob Phillips said: "We are delighted that in Castle we have found a purchaser who has satisfied those criteria as well as offering excellent financial terms." The price was £30-£50m more than forecast.

A BBC spokesman said the corporation would not be changing its name. "We may have sold our transmission network but we still consider ourselves as a broadcaster. Anyway, we are called the BBC in our charter."

Virginia Bottomley, the national heritage secretary, said: "The BBC will retain the net proceeds of the sale to invest in digital production technology and related work. It is also good news for licence fee payers. The BBC has secured a good return on past investment." All 500 staff have been

transferred to the new outfit but may well face job losses.

Derek Foster, the shadow Whitehall minister, said: "This is just the latest in a long line of privatisations which are being rushed through to beat the election deadline. This assembly has put into doubt whether the taxpayer is getting the best deal and there are also doubts over the job security of the staff."

The partners include Telediffusion de France, part of the France Telecom Group, and investment firms Berkshire Partners and Candover Investments.

The assets in the sale include the land and transmitters on nearly 740 sites across Britain. Under the terms of the deal, 300 BBC staff will transfer to the new company.

BBC transmission began operations 75 years ago from a single transmitting station on the roof of Selfridge's department store in London's central Oxford Street.

The Castle consortium has been granted a 10-year contract for transmission of BBC1 and BBC2 analogue television services and the BBC's five national radio stations. The transmission service for digital television, when it starts, will be put out to tender.

However, one old transmitter has been excluded from the deal and remains in the joint hands of BBC and Castle Transmission Services. The redundant 2LO transmitter, which was used for the first broadcast of radio services in November 1922, has recently been repaired by local engineers in Daventry, where the tiny seven-foot high tower now stands.

"2LO calling" was the famous call sign that preceded all programmes from Marconi House in the Strand, to which the transmitter was later moved.

Row builds up over the latest privatisation

Christian Wolmar

Ministers have been accused of rushing through the privatisation of the Building Research Establishment without creating a "level playing field for all bidders".

Nick Raynsford, the shadow construction minister, has accused his counterpart, Robert Jones, the minister for construction, of being "economical with the truth" over the privatisation of the BRE, which carries out research on building materials for the Government and the industry. The BRE is being sold to an in-house management team which beat off competition from University College London and the deal is supposed to be completed within a few days at a price that has yet to be announced.

Earlier this week Mr Raynsford failed in a call for an emergency debate on the issue in Parliament. He said an internal study group into the future of the BRE had been set up to examine a range of issues relating to the organisation's in-

come, efficiency and expenditure. Five members of the in-house management team were on that group and Mr Raynsford claimed that this gave them an unfair advantage over outside bidders.

He said that in parliamentary answers Mr Jones had claimed that no documentation relating to that group had been disclosed to either bidder. However, in a subsequent answer, Mr Jones confirmed that five members of the in-house team had been on the study group.

Mr Raynsford told the Commons: "I believe that this involves a serious failure to give full and straightforward answers to parliamentary questions."

Mr Raynsford is demanding a new inquiry into the sale by the Commons Environment Committee and said yesterday that the way in which this privatisation has been conducted raises serious grounds for concern. The Government is desperate to rush this privatisation through for ideological reasons with scant regard to the public interest."

Adams urges move to prevent parades

Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams said last night that the onus was on the British and Irish governments to resolve the issue of contentious loyalist parades in Northern Ireland.

He spoke out after meeting of residents of the nationalist Garvaghy Road in Portadown, Co Armagh, where Orangemen marched last summer after a three-day stand-off with police at Drumcree.

This year, Mr Adams said: "Nationalists are not prepared to let the Orange Order walk over them. The days of Orange supremacy are long gone." He said the local MP, Unionist leader David Trimble, could show leadership by engaging with his own constituents.

Mr Adams added: "The onus, however, should not be on the

people of the area but on the two governments to uphold their rights and to prevent a repetition of the disgraceful events of last year."

But the Irish Prime Minister John Bruton, speaking on a visit to Northern Ireland, said problems over parades were best resolved at local level.

He declined to comment on a call by Mr Adams earlier this week for Irish government monitors to be sent to all flash-point parades.

Meanwhile, a major security operation was mounted in Londonderry last night when police and troops launched a hunt for an IRA bomb. The "explosive device" may have been abandoned in the nationalist Creggan area up to three days ago, said the RUC.

SAVE £150 ON LAUNDRY MACHINES

OVER 50 IN STORE

Washing machines

TRICITY BENDIX

Hotpoint

Whirlpool

Tricity Bendix

Whirlpool

Hotpoint

Bosch

Zanussi

Washing machines

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Washing machines

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Washing machines

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Washing machines

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Washing machines

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Washing machines

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Washing machines

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Washing machines

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Washing machines

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

SAVE £100 ON REFRIGERATION

OVER 50 IN STORE

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hotpoint

Whirlpool

Tricity Bendix

Whirlpool

Hotpoint

Bosch

Zanussi

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

Refrigerators

Indesit

Hoover

Tricity Bendix

Zanussi

THE COMET PRICE index

YOU CAN'T BUY BETTER

Use the Comet Price Index to find the lowest prices on top brands, guaranteed with the Comet Price Promise.

SALE - FINAL WEEKEND

NINTENDO 64

THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL GAMES MACHINE AVAILABLE TODAY!

Electrolux

Kenwood

Swan

Morphy Richards

Tefal

Kenwood

Revlon

Rowenta

Goodmans

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

SAVE £200 ON TV VIDEO PACKAGES

OVER 50 IN STORE

TV and video

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

SAVE £150 ON AUDIO EQUIPMENT

OVER 50 IN STORE

Audio equipment

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Toshiba

Panasonic

Sony

Parents to oppose children's bus ban

Michael Streeter

Parents of pupils stopped from using a company's buses because of unruly behaviour have launched a petition to get the ban overturned.

Yesterday pupils of King Richard Secondary School, Portsmouth, whose behaviour has been likened to that of the fictional St Trinian's girls, enjoyed their last trips on the Provincial Bus Company's routes before the week-long ban starts on Monday.

The company said it decided to impose the "trial" ban after an increase in violence and vandalism in which drivers reported windows smashed, emergency exits opened and money stolen.

Colin Yorwerth, the company's operations director, said there had been an incident yesterday morning when two children had thrown coins at a bus window. "I understand the school are looking into it and may have the names of those involved."

He said the firm had lost some customers because of the trouble, but was prepared to risk losing the income from the children to ensure safety. "I am really concerned that somebody could get badly hurt. Safety of the passengers - and of the drivers - is my main priority," he said. The ban, which affects six routes in the Cosham and Pauls-

grove area, would be reviewed at the end of next week when they would consider any further action, he added.

Parents have received a letter from the school's head teacher informing them their children will not be able to use Provincial buses next week.

Mr Peter Warburton, said the school had made a great effort to improve pupils' behaviour on buses and had taken disciplinary action against some. In his letter he conceded the ban would affect innocent children but said he supported the decision to try and eradicate "anti-social behaviour".

Parents have claimed the company is overreacting and some are threatening to keep their children off school rather than see them face a long walk.

Margaret Whittaker, 37, from Pauls-grove, said she was planning to start a petition against the move.

"I am really worried. My daughter Tina is 13 years old. It is a 40-minute walk and anything could happen. I am a single parent living with my dad and I can't drive. I will worry myself sick."

The ban does not affect school buses which provide free transport for children travelling from further afield, though the company had reports of trouble on these routes yesterday.



Trouble in transit: Children arriving by bus for what could be the last time at King Richard School in Portsmouth yesterday

Photograph: Tom Pileston

Giants of computer games to join battle

The two biggest names in the world of computer games consoles have started a battle to win the hearts of the nation's games addicts.

Sony, market leader for the last year with its PlayStation console, yesterday announced a big price cut, the day before rival Nintendo launches a new flagship product.

Sony's PlayStation console will drop in price to £129.99, down from £199.99, from 24 March, nearly a month after Nintendo's N64, priced at about £250, hits the shops.

One industry expert warned that sales of the N64 were likely to be hit by "Buzz Lightyear Syndrome", after the *Toy Story* character that became many children's must-have present last Christmas - only to disappear from shelves in the rush to buy.

Only 20,000 N64 units have been shipped to the UK in advance of today's launch.

"It might well be Buzz Lightyear syndrome," said Marcus Hawkins, editor of *Games Master* magazine. "Price is going to be a major factor in the war between Nintendo and the other manufacturers."

The Sega Saturn and Sony PlayStation have become very mainstream. There is a lot of expectation and excitement about N64, but I think it will appeal more to the older, hardened games fan than to young kids."

Sony company executives said the price cut was part of an aggressive price war designed to tempt games players away from the N64.

"Production (of PlayStation) is now running at 1 million units per month. This capacity gives us the opportunity to market PlayStation at an aggressive mass-market price point, bringing in a wider range of consumers," said UK managing director Ray Maguire.

Also in next month, many older PlayStation games titles will drop in price to as little as £20. The move is seen as a direct attack at Nintendo, whose N64 game titles cost between £50 and £70.

A launch party for the N64 was held last night at the Riverside Studios in Hammersmith, London.

Bob Monkhouse compared the event and the guests included pop groups, television stars from various soap operas and sundry Gladiators.

A spokeswoman for Nintendo said: "It's fair to say that 20,000 (N64 units) on the first day won't be enough, but the volume in sales in America and Japan has been so great that they just cannot make them fast enough. They are now on maximum overdrive to meet the expected sales levels."

Another 15,000 machines will arrive within a week and a further 140,000 by the end of May. The flagship game title is Super Mario 64, selling for £59.99.

Two other games will be available immediately, *Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire* (£59.99) and *Pilotwings* (£49.99). A fourth game, *WaveRider*, will be released later costing £54.99.

Lawyer wins police damages

A lawyer who issued formal complaints against detectives and was "maliciously prosecuted" by them is to receive £45,000 damages after a police apology, a High Court judge was told yesterday.

Legal executive Hazel Jones, 33, sued the Chief Constable of Essex for false imprisonment, malicious prosecution, defamation, malicious falsehood and conspiracy for the "anxiety, distress and humiliation" she suffered when she was acting for a client.

The action, launched in January 1994, was settled when the Chief Constable issued her with an apology and accepted the arrest should not have taken place.

Her counsel, Ben Emmerson, told Mr Justice French: "In addition, the Chief Constable has offered to pay £45,000 in satisfaction of her claims."

Her reason for bringing this action was to vindicate her good name and reputation, and to remove any remaining doubts which may linger as to the validity of her arrest and prosecution.

The police chief was not represented at the hearing when a statement read out in court described the "oppressive, arbitrary

and unconstitutional" misconduct of his officers, who kept Ms Jones in custody for four hours.

Ms Jones said after the hearing that the policemen involved had since been promoted and had moved from Chelmsford police station. None had faced disciplinary action, she said.

"The amount of the damages demonstrate the extent of the wrong done to me," she said outside court.

Ms Jones was arrested in April 1992 on suspicion of dishonestly handling stolen property after a client, suspected by the police of burglary, brought a bag to her Chelmsford office.

The client had been asked by police to bring the bag to Chelmsford police station. A detective told Ms Jones she would have to make a statement about how she came into possession of the bag, but she said she could not supply evidence against her own client.

The plaintiff was removed from the firm's offices under police escort and in full view of the firm's staff, said Mr Emmerson. She was charged with handling stolen property, photographed, fingerprinted and released on bail, but the charge was dropped a month later.



IT'S CLEVER STUFF

Look for this symbol and you could save up to £278 every year on your fuel bill.

Call 0345 277 200.

Energy Efficiency is clever stuff. In fact the products and services identified by the Energy Efficiency symbol could help you save up to £278 per year off your fuel bill. There's experts on hand to help you at our nationwide Energy Efficiency Advice Centres. For clever advice on how to save money on heating, insulation, glazing, lighting or appliances call 0345 277 200.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY IS AN ENERGY SAVING TRUST PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE, AND DOES NOT ENDORSE ANY PRODUCT, MANUFACTURER OR SERVICE PROVIDER. THE ENERGY SAVING TRUST IS AN INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENT FUNDED BODY. <http://www.est.org.uk>

now
in of
then
high
bad
ious

S

ar

sement
st year
awards

r-suited
reading
exchange
accrual
s.
kes over
e office
is spent

ling and
it to re-
ts. Then
ined by
s. Finally
r's gown
g which,
to be at
"Come
: shouts
oured in
he gold
id its si-
a advcr-
agency
r Britvic.
our Vote
ion gold
seconds
ries.
TBWA's
y Trevor
possibly
stretched

ld award
a for its
aced bus
o strong

ngo won

e
er
u
d
y
h
f

a
I

7

news

Drug clinic plan gazumped by worried village

Residents of a tiny North Yorkshire village were so horrified at plans to open a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in their midst that they raised more than £100,000 in three days in a bid to buy the property themselves.

Villagers in Burton Leonard set about raising the cash after hearing that contracts were about to be exchanged on the Crown House nursing home on the village green.

The charity Addiction Recovery Training Service planned to turn the whitewashed property, which is opposite the village primary school, into a centre for 10 ex-addicts.

But after objections to planners failed, the villagers hastily organised a meeting at which they pledged to go without luxuries and hand over their savings in a last-minute attempt to stop the plans.

Within three days more than £100,000 had been pledged by 50 families in the village, which

has a population of 475. They immediately made an offer, which is now being considered, and if it is accepted they hope to exchange contracts by the beginning of next week.

Post office owner Gerlinde Godber said: "This is a very quiet village and we were concerned for the safety of the children and everyone else. It was never Not In My Back Yard - it was just not the ideal spot for it."

"We started raising the money on Sunday and we were in a position to make an offer on Tuesday. It was incredible."

"We had to move rapidly and the whole village pulled together. I'm not surprised we made it. I'm proud to be able to live here."

The villagers plan to sell the property if they outbid the charity, which had been due to exchange contracts yesterday.

Charity spokesman Kenneth Eckersley, 69, said he had writ-

ten to the village committee promising to back out of the deal if they found another buyer and pay the charity's costs which amount to several thousand pounds.

He said: "It's not my intention or the intention of the charity to upset people anywhere - we don't want to frighten ladies or worry young mothers."

"I find the situation sad but at the same time I can't blame the villagers - they're as fearful of the problem as anybody else. People do not understand our business."

"They hear the word drugs and they get very fearful because drugs is the worst problem in our society today. But it's a problem that has to be tackled by somebody somewhere."

Mr Eckersley said that the charity, which is based in Dover, was already looking at other properties in Yorkshire.

Charity aims to revive ancient names for pastures green



Rural reversal: If the Common Ground Initiative works, fields could revert to traditional names such as Devil's Dole and Haggs. Photograph: Tom

Drop the dead dogma

NEW LABOUR'S EARLY PLEDGES ARE

cut class sizes to 30 or under for 5, 6 and 7 year-olds by using money saved from the assisted places scheme

Cost £490 million

Saving £225 million

It doesn't add up, Mr Blair

The assisted places scheme makes it possible for children from low-income families to attend independent schools. Killing this scheme would achieve nothing. In fact, it would take seven years to phase it out, by which time New Labour would still be £265 million short of the money they need to cut class sizes. (Source: Institute of Public Finance)

Meanwhile they would have damaged the education of up to 65,000 poor children. (The average child in the scheme comes from a family with an income of only £10,900.)

Do these children really benefit? They certainly do. They achieve results up to 3 grades higher at A-level. (Source: London School of Economics)

These tangible results would be thrown away simply because of prejudice against

non-State education. Frankly, this kind of thinking is as out of date as Clause Four. Most Labour voters want success not envy. That's why 55% of them are in favour of the assisted places scheme and only 27% are against it. (Source: MORI)

For the sake of some of Britain's most promising children, help us persuade New Labour to abandon this policy before the election. We have nothing against a New Labour government - just this pointless policy. Please let us pass on your views to your MP. Write to us at Friends of Independent Schools, 56 Buckingham Gate, London, SW1E 6AG.

Parental Choice Matters

Telephone: 0171 233 7297 Fax: 0171 630 5013 email: national@fils.org.uk Website: http://www.fils.org.uk

Past returns to reclaim our fields of dreams

Stephen Goodwin
Heritage Correspondent

Devil's Dole, Handkerchief Croft and Seven Men's Mowth are names of what? Maybe the last contains just a bit of a give-away to ageing campfire singers. Haggs, Skirt and Vicar's Hatchet are three more of the same.

Townies can be forgiven for bafflement at the words. But it would be interesting to know how many agri-businessmen or East Anglian prairie farm managers recognise them as traditional field names.

The environmental charity Common Ground today calls for a revival of field names as part of a move away from intensive farming to a more holistic way of working the land. *Midsummer Leys* or *Saffron Ground* could be burnt on to the five-bar gate so that the visitor knows this is a field with a character and history, not just a commodity.

Most farmers will regard the group's *Manifesto for Fields* as an idealised urban vision of the countryside, owing more to John Constable than the production of food for a nation of 58 million. But Common Ground says it is time for a popular debate about fields, how they should be used, what we want them to look like, and whether it is sensible for the taxpayer to be pouring in a subsidy of £3.3bn a year.

Grants to farmers have encouraged most of the detrimental changes to the land, the charity claims. Some 97 per cent of hay meadows have gone, along with 80 per cent of chalk and limestone downland and 209,000 miles of hedges. Populations of grey partridges, lapwings and skylarks have plummeted.

Common Ground's manifesto says: "Fields are our un-

written history, carved clearings in the wild wood: the accumulation of practical experimentation, invention and subtly extending over generations. Yet under our gaze this rich combining of culture and nature has been smoothed and sprayed out of existence in half a lifetime."

They want a shift away from the field as a factory, soaked in pesticides and fertilisers, to wildlife-friendly places where livestock can find contentment under a shady tree or crops are grown organically.

Farming should only be subsidised if it produced "wholesome" food, reinforced, the cultural importance of fields and improved conditions for farm workers, the group says. And food should be grown for local markets, cutting out the costs and pollution of long journeys.

It is not an anti-farmer manifesto and cites the high suicide rate among farmers who are increasingly isolated on large, mechanised holdings. Nor, according to Sue Clifford, a director of Common Ground, is it impractical. "The BSE crisis has taught us a lot about short cuts and cheap food, meanwhile organic farmers we have talked to are rushed off their feet with demand."

Battlefields, fields that have inspired authors, festival fields and field springs should all be revered, along with the poetic names given centuries ago, though time and the plough may have obscured their meaning.

The ones given above translate as follows: Devil's Dole - unproductive or difficult land; Handkerchief Croft - small piece of land; Seven Men's Mowth - meadow with work for seven men; Haggs - place cleared of trees; Skirt - land on a boundary; Vicar's Hatchet - land assigned to the parson.

Suicide theory over 39-floor fall

Michael Streeter

Police in Brazil believe a 31-year-old British management consultant, who fell to her death from the 39th floor of a luxury hotel may have committed suicide.

The body of Katrina Dunleavy, 31, who was on a business trip to Rio de Janeiro for the London-based accountants KPMG, was found by security staff at the five-star Meridien Hotel earlier this week. According to local police, a day before her death Ms Dunleavy had been removed from the "dangerous" out-of-bounds roof terrace from which she is believed to have fallen.

Yesterday staff at KPMG were shocked at the death of their colleague, who had been with the firm for three years. A spokesman said: "It is a tragic loss to her family and to all her colleagues in the firm. She was a very professional person, she was a good operator and highly thought of. We are saddened by this loss."

The spokesman added that the dead woman, who was single, had been on a normal as-

signment in Brazil, a country she had visited on business before. They could not speculate on what may have caused the tragedy.

Ms Dunleavy, who was originally from Liverpool, and who specialised in the telecommunications industry, had travelled with two colleagues to Rio last Sunday for a two-week business trip.

Gilda Antao, the local British pro-consul said a post-mortem examination had been completed but its findings have not been made public. "We do not know the exact details of her death but we have been in contact with her family," she said. "Arrangements are being made to bring her back to Britain."

The terrace from which she is thought to have fallen in the early hours of Wednesday is an emergency exit and cannot be locked, but there is a sign in three languages telling guests to stay away because it is dangerous. A police spokesman told reporters: "The investigation points toward suicide, but we are waiting for the forensic and coroner's reports to close the case."

هكذا من الأصل

Court threat to Proctor over shop accounts

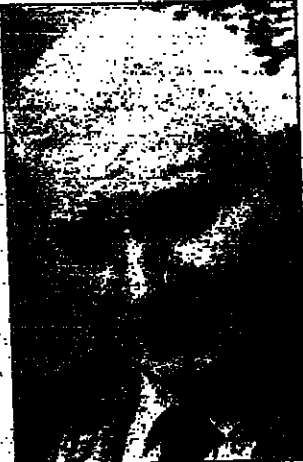
Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

Harvey Proctor, the former Conservative MP, could face prosecution for failing to submit accounts on his shirt shop for the past two years.

Thirteen high-profile Tories including the Deputy Prime Minister Michael Heseltine, bought shares in Cottonrose, Lord Archer, the former Conservative Party vice-chairman, was also among the investors who helped Mr Proctor to set up his shop in south-west London after he was forced out of Parliament 10 years ago.

When it last published its figures in March 1994, it was £150,000 in debt. Companies House has confirmed that if Mr Proctor does not deliver the past two years' accounts by April 4 he is likely to be prosecuted under the Companies Act. The case would be heard in a magistrates' court where the maximum fine for failing to submit accounts is £5,000. If Mr Proctor does file accounts in time, he is still liable for a possible late payment penalty of £1,000.

Among the other investors in the company are several who have since faced scandals themselves. Tim Yeo, member for Suffolk South, was embarrassed by revelations that he had an illegitimate child, while Neil Hamilton, MP for Taunton, faced allegations that he accepted cash for questions. David Ashby



Harvey Proctor: 'It has been a struggle to survive'

was deselected by his Leicestershire North West constituency after losing a libel case over allegations that he was homosexual.

Other Tory MPs who put money into Mr Proctor's company included Mark Lennox-Boyd, David Heathcoat-Amory, Richard Shepherd, Sir Nicholas Bonsor, Philip Oppenheim and Michael Brown. Another investor was David Lightbown, the former Conservative whip who died last year.

Leasequre, the public affairs consultancy run by the MP for Weymouth and Portland, David Evans, also put money into the company.

Mr Proctor, former MP for

Billericay, said that he had not submitted accounts for his shop in Richmond because difficult trading conditions had left him unable to pay his accountant. Many other small companies had the same problems, he said.

"It has been quite a struggle to survive. It has not been helped by press comment every six months that we are closing down," he said.

"The newspapers treat this company as though it was ICI. Take your tanks off our lawn, please," he said.

Mr Proctor left Parliament in 1987 after facing court charges relating to his homosexuality.

Neil Hamilton and his wife Christine, who both hold shares in the shop, were there four years ago when Mr Proctor was attacked by two men who were later jailed for the assault. Mr Hamilton sustained a broken nose when he tried to help his friend.



Stuck on you: Visitors inspecting a papier mache statue of the Queen Mother at the Rush on Paper (People-Sized People in Paper) exhibition by Peter Rush at Wolverhampton Art Gallery
Photograph: Joel Chan/Newsteam

No end to beef ban says EU commissioner

Sarah Helm
Brussels

British hopes of securing an early end to the beef ban were dealt another severe blow yesterday when Emma Bonino, Consumer Affairs Commissioner, said the Commission was "not even thinking about lifting the embargo."

Ms Bonino, a sharp-talking Italian who is better known in Britain as Minister for Fisheries Policy, has recently been appointed by the Commission to oversee public health in the wake of the beef scandal. She looks likely to prove a tougher opponent when it comes to lifting the embargo than Franz Fischler, the Agriculture Commissioner.

A champion of individual and consumer rights throughout her life, Mrs Bonino told the French newspaper, *Le Monde*: "It is out of the question to weaken the embargo. The truth is we are not ever thinking about lifting the embargo. And we will not be thinking about for a long time."

The commissioner's comments come just four days after Britain submitted new proposals to Brussels for a partial lifting of the embargo, along

with certain assurances for further eradication. Presenting the plan, Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, called on his partners to remember the "Florence agreement", a reference to the much-vaunted deal at last year's June summit. The agreement was presented by the Government as a "victory" and a justification for the "beef war" because it supposedly contained commitments from other European countries to a gradual lifting of the ban.

However, Britain's partners denied that there were any commitments at the time and eight months later they are talking as tough as ever.

The European Commission has no intention of recommending even a partial lifting of the ban until Britain can prove that every possible safeguard is in place. The Commission itself has recently come under fierce criticism from the European Parliament for failing in its duty to monitor mad cow disease in British herds after the first alert in 1989.

Mrs Bonino's new public health post was created in part to defuse criticism from the Parliament and to reassure member states that no such crisis could occur again.

Media warned on Bridgewater

The senior judge in the Bridgewater Three case yesterday stressed that none of the convictions had been quashed and none would be unless and until the Court of Appeal was satisfied it was unsafe.

Lord Justice Roch was responding to "inaccurate" reporting in the media of last Friday's hearing, when the men, convicted 17 years ago of murdering newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater, were released on bail. One of the three, James Robinson, and relatives of cousins Vincent and Michael Hickey were in court yesterday. They heard the judge say that if, at the end of the full appeal hearing next month, the court concluded the convictions were not safe, "then we will quash them and the presumption of innocence in favour of all unconvicted persons is re-established."

The judge said most media coverage last week was accurate, but some was not, so it was necessary to reiterate what the court said "in the hope that in future all reports and not merely some will have the accuracy that court reporting demands."

He said the court had stated it would hear evidence from scientific experts indicating that a

confession by the fourth defendant, Patrick Molloy, who died in prison, had been obtained by a trick. If that evidence was accepted, it would lead to the quashing of his conviction.

The court had then said: "It is in our view right that the public, the appellants and the family of the murdered boy should have the opportunity to learn precisely how this fresh evidence came to light, what its significance is and also to know what further evidence there may be." The court would then go on to consider the effects of all this evidence on the safety of the other convictions.

Describing the court's function, the judge said it was not a court of inquiry or royal commission. It was concerned with what went wrong in the investigation and trial and the effect on the safety of the convictions, not with why things went wrong. It would not inquire into, for instance, which individuals were responsible for non-disclosure of evidence that might have helped the defence, or what other person or persons might have committed the murder.

But the court did have power to refer any evidence of such wrongdoing to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

For high fliers and the seriously chic.



Fiesta Flight
from £155.80 per month on the road* 10% APR.
(Plus deposit and optional final purchase payment.)



Fiesta Chicane
from £171.91 per month on the road* 9.9% APR.
(Plus deposit and optional final purchase payment.)

Fiesta Flight

- Tilting & removable sunroof
- Power steering
- Central locking
- Power front windows
- Remote tailgate release
- Body colour bumpers
- Tinted glass
- 165/70 R13 tyres
- Unique wheel covers

Fiesta Chicane

- Tilting & removable sunroof
- Power steering
- Central locking
- Power front windows
- Remote tailgate release
- Body colour bumpers
- Tinted glass
- Tailgate spoiler
- Front fog lamps
- Sports seats
- Sports suspension settings
- 185/55 R14 tyres
- 14" steel wheels

	Typical Examples Flight 1.3 3dr	Chicane 1.25 3dr
Mileage (per annum)	12,000	12,000
Recommended retail price**	£9,460.00	£10,995.00
Estimated on the road price**	£10,125.00	£11,260.00
Deposit (30%)	£3,037.50	£3,378.00
Balance	£7,087.50	£7,882.00
Total charge for credit†	£1,152.70	£1,278.84
Total amount payable	£11,977.70	£12,536.84
Term (months)	95	95
Number of monthly payments	94	94
Monthly payment	£155.80	£171.91
Optional final payment to purchase (Minimum Guaranteed Future Value††)	£4,446.00	£4,980.00
APR	10.0%	9.9%

For further information call 0345 111 888



*Manufacturer's Recommended Retail Price including VAT at 17.5% at time of going to press. **Estimated on the road price is based on Manufacturer's Recommended Retail Price and £665.00 estimated on-the-road costs covering delivery to the dealer, 12 months road fund licence, estimated cost of fuel and number plates. †Total charges for Credit includes an administration fee of £35.00 (includes VAT), payable with the first monthly payment. ††Further charges may be made subject to mileage and condition of the vehicle at the end of the finance agreement. Written quotations are available on request from Ford Credit Europe plc, PO Box 46, Brentwood, Essex CM13 3AR. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Finance is provided subject to status over 18's only. Certain categories of business users are ineligible. Subject to availability. Available on vehicles registered between February 14, 1997 and May 31, 1997.

news

British movie moguls line up for the riches of Camelot

Stars come out in force to support film-makers' bids for slice of £156m lottery cake

Marianne Macdonald
Arts Correspondent

Elton John and Ewan McGregor were among the stars who lined up behind film companies yesterday to bid for a slice of the £156m of lottery money being made available to make British feature films.

Intended to help overcome the fragmented and ad hoc character of the domestic film industry, the Arts Council lottery scheme will award up to £8m each year to four "franchises", or consortia, for six years.

The initiative follows a consultants' report which suggested that the Arts Council was "in a unique position to be the catalyst of change" within the British film industry by means of its lottery income.

There is no question of Hollywood-style budgets, however: funds will be limited to £2m per film and the required private funding is unlikely to push that much beyond £3m.

The Arts Council hopes to recoup its grants from film profits - but will plough such income back into more productions.

The bids which went in for yesterday's 6pm deadline included one from Studio Pictures, a BBC-backed consortium led by its former head of single drama, George Faber.



Movie millions: Elton John and Helena Bonham Carter are supporting a film industry bid for lottery cash, some of which would be used to fund productions starring old favourites like Rupert the Bear

It boasts the support of BBC Films, and Ewan McGregor, who shot to fame in *Trainspotting*, and who has set up a talent company with his co-star from that film, Jonny Lee Miller, to develop opportunities for actors in Britain's film industry.

Also hopeful were UK Filmworks, headed by Mike Newell, who directed *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, David Parfitt, who produced *The Madness of King George*, and Granada Films.

Another bid came from Partners In Film, a heavy-weight consortium which includes Elton John's Rocket Pictures and Merchant Ivory Productions, famed for hits such as *A Room*

with a View and *Howards End*. It says it will make 34 films in the six years.

A fourth consortium, Double Negative, is led by Working Title Films, the successful British production company which catapulted Hugh Grant to fame in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*. Its partners include Revolution Films - formed by producer

Andrew Eaton and director Michael Winterbottom, who made the feature film *Jude* - and The Jones Company.

Pathé Pictures offered a heavyweight application boasting producers Simon Channing-Williams (*Naked, Secrets and Lies*), Jake Eberts of Allied Films (*Driving Miss Daisy*, *Chariots of Fire*, *Dances With Wolves*),

Norma Heyman (*Dangerous Liaisons*), Lynda Miles of Pandora Productions (*The Commitments*) and Sarah Radcliffe (*My Beautiful Laundrette*).

Penzance Films accounted for another bid from the consortium including Metrodome Group, the production company responsible for *Leon The Pig Farmer*, and the British directors

Nicholas Roeg (*Don't Look Now*, *The Man Who Fell To Earth*) and Ken Russell (*Women In Love*, *Tommy*).

The Children's Film and Television Foundation also applied to service "one of the most neglected areas of the British film industry - the children's and family film".

Meanwhile, United Animation wants funding to make feature-length cartoons starring Rupert the Bear, Rumpelstiltskin and Odysseus.

The Arts Council received 400 initial applications. The winning bids will be chosen by its film advisory panel headed by Charles Denton, the BBC's former head of drama group, and announced in May.

SALE LAST ENDS 2 DAYS ENDS MARCH 2ND



Schreiber
CHILTERN
Stirling green doors and drawer fronts provide the perfect contrast for solid pine knobs, handles, network and cables.

PRICE BASED ON THESE
8 RIGID CABINETS
COMPRISSES: 1000mm Hi-Line Base Unit x 3, 600mm 3 Drawer Base Unit x 1, 1000mm Full Height Wall Unit x 2, 600mm Built Under Oven Housing Unit, 600mm Hob Wall Unit.
SAVE £242

COMPLETE* 8 CABINET CHILTERN KITCHEN
8 CABINETS, OVEN, HOB, EXTRACTOR, SINK, TAPS AND WORKTOPS INCLUDING A WASHING MACHINE
SALE PRICE
£1239.79 Was £1481.79

COMPARABLE KITCHEN CABINETS
GUARANTEED 20% LESS
THAN ANY OTHER NATIONAL RETAILER'S QUOTE
See leaflets for details

THIS AEG WASHING MACHINE*
£249.99 AEG8420
FOR ONLY **£200 OFF** SAVE £200
MACHINE OR TRICITY BENDIX WASHING MACHINE OR WASHER/DRYER IN OUR RANGE
*When you spend £500 or more on any Hygena or Schreiber kitchen. Offer limited to one per customer/household. Not transferable to any other product. (Offer applies to Hygena & Schreiber cabinets and accessories included in the Price List).

RANGE COOKER*
FOR ONLY £999.99
Current In-Store Price £1149.99
Available in Green, Blue, Parchment & Burgundy
APL 5744/54/64/74

LOW COST INSTALLATION AVAILABLE
MFI

FOR YOUR NEAREST STORE PHONE 0800 152192
SHOPPING HOURS: Mon 10-8, Tues 10-6, Wed 10-6, Thurs 10-6, Fri 10-8, Sat 9-6, Sun 11-5
NORTHERN IRELAND EXCEPTIONS: Mon 10-6, Tues 10-6, Thurs 10-6, Fri 10-6, Sun 12-5
*FOR EXAMPLE THE ABOVE COMPLETE KITCHEN COMPRISSES: 8 CABINETS AS LISTED, ACCESSORIES - Stainless Steel Laminated (SINKS) 225, 240 and 270mm, 1000mm, 1200mm, 1500mm, 1800mm, 2100mm, 2400mm, 2700mm, 3000mm, 3300mm, 3600mm, 3900mm, 4200mm, 4500mm, 4800mm, 5100mm, 5400mm, 5700mm, 6000mm, 6300mm, 6600mm, 6900mm, 7200mm, 7500mm, 7800mm, 8100mm, 8400mm, 8700mm, 9000mm, 9300mm, 9600mm, 9900mm, 10200mm, 10500mm, 10800mm, 11100mm, 11400mm, 11700mm, 12000mm, 12300mm, 12600mm, 12900mm, 13200mm, 13500mm, 13800mm, 14100mm, 14400mm, 14700mm, 15000mm, 15300mm, 15600mm, 15900mm, 16200mm, 16500mm, 16800mm, 17100mm, 17400mm, 17700mm, 18000mm, 18300mm, 18600mm, 18900mm, 19200mm, 19500mm, 19800mm, 20100mm, 20400mm, 20700mm, 21000mm, 21300mm, 21600mm, 21900mm, 22200mm, 22500mm, 22800mm, 23100mm, 23400mm, 23700mm, 24000mm, 24300mm, 24600mm, 24900mm, 25200mm, 25500mm, 25800mm, 26100mm, 26400mm, 26700mm, 27000mm, 27300mm, 27600mm, 27900mm, 28200mm, 28500mm, 28800mm, 29100mm, 29400mm, 29700mm, 30000mm, 30300mm, 30600mm, 30900mm, 31200mm, 31500mm, 31800mm, 32100mm, 32400mm, 32700mm, 33000mm, 33300mm, 33600mm, 33900mm, 34200mm, 34500mm, 34800mm, 35100mm, 35400mm, 35700mm, 36000mm, 36300mm, 36600mm, 36900mm, 37200mm, 37500mm, 37800mm, 38100mm, 38400mm, 38700mm, 39000mm, 39300mm, 39600mm, 39900mm, 40200mm, 40500mm, 40800mm, 41100mm, 41400mm, 41700mm, 42000mm, 42300mm, 42600mm, 42900mm, 43200mm, 43500mm, 43800mm, 44100mm, 44400mm, 44700mm, 45000mm, 45300mm, 45600mm, 45900mm, 46200mm, 46500mm, 46800mm, 47100mm, 47400mm, 47700mm, 48000mm, 48300mm, 48600mm, 48900mm, 49200mm, 49500mm, 49800mm, 50100mm, 50400mm, 50700mm, 51000mm, 51300mm, 51600mm, 51900mm, 52200mm, 52500mm, 52800mm, 53100mm, 53400mm, 53700mm, 54000mm, 54300mm, 54600mm, 54900mm, 55200mm, 55500mm, 55800mm, 56100mm, 56400mm, 56700mm, 57000mm, 57300mm, 57600mm, 57900mm, 58200mm, 58500mm, 58800mm, 59100mm, 59400mm, 59700mm, 60000mm, 60300mm, 60600mm, 60900mm, 61200mm, 61500mm, 61800mm, 62100mm, 62400mm, 62700mm, 63000mm, 63300mm, 63600mm, 63900mm, 64200mm, 64500mm, 64800mm, 65100mm, 65400mm, 65700mm, 66000mm, 66300mm, 66600mm, 66900mm, 67200mm, 67500mm, 67800mm, 68100mm, 68400mm, 68700mm, 69000mm, 69300mm, 69600mm, 69900mm, 70200mm, 70500mm, 70800mm, 71100mm, 71400mm, 71700mm, 72000mm, 72300mm, 72600mm, 72900mm, 73200mm, 73500mm, 73800mm, 74100mm, 74400mm, 74700mm, 75000mm, 75300mm, 75600mm, 75900mm, 76200mm, 76500mm, 76800mm, 77100mm, 77400mm, 77700mm, 78000mm, 78300mm, 78600mm, 78900mm, 79200mm, 79500mm, 79800mm, 80100mm, 80400mm, 80700mm, 81000mm, 81300mm, 81600mm, 81900mm, 82200mm, 82500mm, 82800mm, 83100mm, 83400mm, 83700mm, 84000mm, 84300mm, 84600mm, 84900mm, 85200mm, 85500mm, 85800mm, 86100mm, 86400mm, 86700mm, 87000mm, 87300mm, 87600mm, 87900mm, 88200mm, 88500mm, 88800mm, 89100mm, 89400mm, 89700mm, 90000mm, 90300mm, 90600mm, 90900mm, 91200mm, 91500mm, 91800mm, 92100mm, 92400mm, 92700mm, 93000mm, 93300mm, 93600mm, 93900mm, 94200mm, 94500mm, 94800mm, 95100mm, 95400mm, 95700mm, 96000mm, 96300mm, 96600mm, 96900mm, 97200mm, 97500mm, 97800mm, 98100mm, 98400mm, 98700mm, 99000mm, 99300mm, 99600mm, 99900mm, 100200mm, 100500mm, 100800mm, 101100mm, 101400mm, 101700mm, 102000mm, 102300mm, 102600mm, 102900mm, 103200mm, 103500mm, 103800mm, 104100mm, 104400mm, 104700mm, 105000mm, 105300mm, 105600mm, 105900mm, 106200mm, 106500mm, 106800mm, 107100mm, 107400mm, 107700mm, 108000mm, 108300mm, 108600mm, 108900mm, 109200mm, 109500mm, 109800mm, 110100mm, 110400mm, 110700mm, 111000mm, 111300mm, 111600mm, 111900mm, 112200mm, 112500mm, 112800mm, 113100mm, 113400mm, 113700mm, 114000mm, 114300mm, 114600mm, 114900mm, 115200mm, 115500mm, 115800mm, 116100mm, 116400mm, 116700mm, 117000mm, 117300mm, 117600mm, 117900mm, 118200mm, 118500mm, 118800mm, 119100mm, 119400mm, 119700mm, 120000mm, 120300mm, 120600mm, 120900mm, 121200mm, 121500mm, 121800mm, 122100mm, 122400mm, 122700mm, 123000mm, 123300mm, 123600mm, 123900mm, 124200mm, 124500mm, 124800mm, 125100mm, 125400mm, 125700mm, 126000mm, 126300mm, 126600mm, 126900mm, 127200mm, 127500mm, 127800mm, 128100mm, 128400mm, 128700mm, 129000mm, 129300mm, 129600mm, 129900mm, 130200mm, 130500mm, 130800mm, 131100mm, 131400mm, 131700mm, 132000mm, 132300mm, 132600mm, 132900mm, 133200mm, 133500mm, 133800mm, 134100mm, 134400mm, 134700mm, 135000mm, 135300mm, 135600mm, 135900mm, 136200mm, 136500mm, 136800mm, 137100mm, 137400mm, 137700mm, 138000mm, 138300mm, 138600mm, 138900mm, 139200mm, 139500mm, 139800mm, 140100mm, 140400mm, 140700mm, 141000mm, 141300mm, 141600mm, 141900mm, 142200mm, 142500mm, 142800mm, 143100mm, 143400mm, 143700mm, 144000mm, 144300mm, 144600mm, 144900mm, 145200mm, 145500mm, 145800mm, 146100mm, 146400mm, 146700mm, 147000mm, 147300mm, 147600mm, 147900mm, 148200mm, 148500mm, 148800mm, 149100mm, 149400mm, 149700mm, 150000mm, 150300mm, 150600mm, 150900mm, 151200mm, 151500mm, 151800mm, 152100mm, 152400mm, 152700mm, 153000mm, 153300mm, 153600mm, 153900mm, 154200mm, 154500mm, 154800mm, 155100mm, 155400mm, 155700mm, 156000mm, 156300mm, 156600mm, 156900mm, 157200mm, 157500mm, 157800mm, 158100mm, 158400mm, 158700mm, 159000mm, 159300mm, 159600mm, 159900mm, 160200mm, 160500mm, 160800mm, 161100mm, 161400mm, 161700mm, 162000mm, 162300mm, 162600mm, 162900mm, 163200mm, 163500mm, 163800mm, 164100mm, 164400mm, 164700mm, 165000mm, 165300mm, 165600mm, 165900mm, 166200mm, 166500mm, 166800mm, 167100mm, 167400mm, 167700mm, 168000mm, 168300mm, 168600mm, 168900mm, 169200mm, 169500mm, 169800mm, 170100mm, 170400mm, 170700mm, 171000mm, 171300mm, 171600mm, 171900mm, 172200mm, 172500mm, 172800mm, 173100mm, 173400mm, 173700mm, 174000mm, 174300mm, 174600mm, 174900mm, 175200mm, 175500mm, 175800mm, 176100mm, 176400mm, 176700mm, 177000mm, 177300mm, 177600mm, 177900mm, 178200mm, 178500mm, 178800mm, 179100mm, 179400mm, 179700mm, 180000mm, 180300mm, 180600mm, 180900mm, 181200mm, 181500mm, 181800mm, 182100mm, 182400mm, 182700mm, 183000mm, 183300mm, 183600mm, 183900mm, 184200mm, 184500mm, 184800mm, 185100mm, 185400mm, 185700mm, 186000mm, 186300mm, 186600mm, 186900mm, 187200mm, 187500mm, 187800mm, 188100mm, 188400mm, 188700mm, 189000mm, 189300mm, 189600mm, 189900mm, 190200mm, 190500mm, 190800mm, 191100mm, 191400mm, 191700mm, 192000mm, 192300mm, 192600mm, 192900mm, 193200mm, 193500mm, 193800mm, 194100mm, 194400mm, 194700mm, 195000mm, 195300mm, 195600mm, 195900mm, 196200mm, 196500mm, 196800mm, 197100mm, 197400mm, 197700mm, 198000mm, 198300mm, 198600mm, 198900mm, 199200mm, 199500mm, 199800mm, 200100mm, 200400mm, 200700mm, 201000mm, 201300mm, 201600mm, 201900mm, 202200mm, 202500mm, 202800mm, 203100mm, 203400mm, 203700mm, 204000mm, 204300mm, 204600mm, 204900mm, 205200mm, 205500mm, 205800mm, 206100mm, 206400mm, 206700mm, 207000mm, 207300mm, 207600mm, 207900mm, 208200mm, 208500mm, 208800mm, 209100mm, 209400mm, 209700mm, 210000mm, 210300mm, 210600mm, 210900mm, 211200mm, 211500mm, 211800mm, 212100mm, 212400mm, 212700mm, 213000mm, 213300mm, 213600mm, 213900mm, 214200mm, 214500mm, 214800mm, 215100mm, 215400mm, 215700mm, 216000mm, 216300mm, 216600mm, 216900mm, 217200mm, 217500mm, 217800mm, 218100mm, 218400mm, 218700mm, 219000mm, 219300mm, 219600mm, 219900mm, 220200mm, 220500mm, 220800mm, 221100mm, 221400mm, 221700mm, 222000mm, 222300mm, 222600mm, 222900mm, 223200mm, 223500mm, 223800mm, 224100mm, 224400mm, 224700mm, 225000mm, 225300mm, 225600mm, 225900mm, 226200mm, 226500mm, 226800mm, 227100mm, 227400mm, 227700mm, 228000mm, 228300mm, 228600mm, 228900mm, 229200mm, 229500mm, 229800mm, 230100mm, 230400mm, 230700mm, 231000mm, 231300mm, 231600mm, 231900mm, 232200mm, 232500mm, 232800mm, 233100mm, 233400mm, 233700mm, 234000mm, 234300mm, 234600mm, 234900mm, 235200mm, 235500mm, 235800mm, 236100mm, 236400mm, 236700mm, 237000mm, 237300mm, 237600mm, 237900mm, 238200mm, 238500mm, 238800mm, 239100mm, 239400mm, 239700mm, 240000mm, 240300mm, 240600mm, 240900mm, 241200mm, 241500mm, 241800mm, 242100mm, 242400mm, 242700mm, 243000mm, 243300mm, 243600mm, 243900mm, 244200mm, 244500mm, 244800mm, 245100mm, 245400mm, 245700mm, 246000mm, 246300mm, 246600mm, 246900mm, 247200mm, 247500mm, 247800mm, 248100mm, 248400mm, 248700mm, 249000mm, 249300mm, 249600mm, 249900mm, 250200mm, 250500mm, 250800mm, 251100mm, 251400mm, 251700mm, 252000mm, 252300mm, 252600mm, 252900mm, 253200mm, 253500mm, 253800mm, 254100mm, 254400mm, 254700mm, 255000mm, 255300mm, 255600mm, 255900mm, 256200mm, 256500mm, 256800mm, 257100mm, 257400mm, 257700mm, 258000mm, 258300mm, 258600mm, 258900mm, 259200mm, 259500mm, 259800mm, 260100mm, 260400mm, 260700mm, 261000mm, 261300mm, 261600mm, 261900mm, 262200mm, 262500mm, 262800mm, 263100mm, 263400mm, 263700mm, 264000mm, 264300mm, 264600mm, 264900mm, 265200mm, 265500mm, 265800mm, 266100mm, 266400mm, 266700mm, 267000mm, 267300mm, 267600mm, 267900mm, 268200mm, 268500mm, 268800mm, 269100mm, 269400mm, 269700mm, 270000mm, 270300mm, 270600mm, 270900mm, 271200mm, 271500mm, 271800mm, 272100mm, 272400mm, 272700mm, 273000mm, 273300mm, 273600mm, 273900mm, 274200mm, 274500mm, 274800mm, 275100mm, 275400mm, 275700mm, 276000mm, 276300mm, 276600mm, 276900mm, 277200mm, 277500mm, 277800mm, 278100mm, 278400mm, 278700mm, 279000mm, 279300mm, 279600mm, 279900mm, 280200mm, 280500mm, 280800mm, 281100mm, 281400mm, 281700mm, 282000mm, 282300mm, 282600mm, 282900mm, 283200mm, 283500mm, 283800mm, 284100mm, 284400mm, 284700mm, 285000mm, 285300mm, 285600mm, 285900mm, 286200mm, 286500mm, 286800mm, 287100mm, 287400mm, 287700mm, 288000mm, 288300mm, 288600mm, 288900mm, 289200mm, 289500mm, 289800mm, 290100mm, 290400mm, 290700mm, 291000mm, 291300mm, 291600mm, 291900mm, 292200mm, 292500mm, 292800mm, 293100mm, 293400mm, 293700mm, 294000mm, 294300mm, 294600mm, 294900mm, 295200mm, 295500mm, 295800mm, 296100mm, 296400mm, 296700mm, 297000mm, 297300mm, 297600mm, 297900mm, 298200mm, 298500mm, 298800mm, 299100mm, 299400mm, 299700mm, 300000mm, 300300mm, 300600mm, 300900mm, 301200mm, 301500mm, 301800mm, 302100mm, 302400mm, 302700mm, 303000mm, 303300mm, 303600mm, 303900mm, 304200mm, 304500mm, 304800mm, 305100mm, 305400mm, 305700mm, 306000mm, 306300mm, 306600mm, 306900mm, 307200mm, 307500mm, 307800mm, 308100mm, 308400mm, 308700mm, 309000mm, 309300mm, 309600mm, 309900mm, 310200mm, 310500mm, 310800mm, 311100mm, 311400mm, 311700mm, 312000mm, 312300mm, 312600mm, 312900mm, 313200mm, 313500mm, 313800mm, 314100mm, 314400mm, 314700mm, 315000mm, 315300mm, 315600mm, 315900mm, 316200mm, 316500mm, 316800mm, 317100mm, 317400mm, 317700mm, 318000mm, 318300mm, 318600mm, 318900mm, 319200mm, 319500mm, 319800mm, 320100mm, 320400mm, 320700mm, 321000mm, 321300mm, 321600mm, 321900mm, 322200mm, 322500mm, 322800mm, 323100mm, 323400mm, 323700mm, 324000mm, 324300mm, 324600mm, 324900mm, 32520

Sexual harassment in army ranks is also more of a problem than ever. After a spate of cases came to light at a training ground in Maryland last year, more than 1,000 female soldiers contacted a hotline to say they had been similarly victimised. Particularly embarrassing for the Pentagon, it emerged that a member of a board set up last year to investigate sexual harassment was himself an alleged harasser.

"The Swiss population was against the Nazis. It does not mean they were in favour of the Jews," Mr Bloch said. "That is something we cannot forget."

Fax Number: 01293 77 67 01. Volume and corporate enquiries please ask for corporate sales. Please telephone by fax or email. Send us money now. Prices exclude courier delivery charge which is normally £29.38 ex VAT (£35 + VAT) for UK mainland. Price, specifications and offers are subject to change availability, and are available on request where possible at no charge. Systems are normally delivered within 7 to 14 days. All orders fulfilled within 28 days unless otherwise specified. Industry standard practice is to measure volume from the CRT box. Actual viewing area can be approx 1". Depending on package software applications are pre-installed or supplied on CD with on-line help. Pack shots are shown for illustration only. Intel Pentium® and AMD™ Technology are trademarks of Intel Corporation.

26 Showrooms Nationwide

Order Direct or call into your nearest Showroom

Aylesbury	Cirencester	Haverhill	Southampton	Weston
Barnet	Gillingham	Harrogate	Norwich	Silvergate
Birmingham	Grimsby	Leeds	Northampton	Stamford
Bristol	High Wycombe	Letchworth	Peterborough	Stratford
Buckingham	Kettering	Rushden	Scotney	Walsall
Cambridge	London	Sutton	Swansea	Warwick

Offer Ends 14th March

international



Exposed: Oil-covered baby sea lions sitting on a rock off Punta del Este, Uruguay, following a spill from a Panamanian tanker which ran aground on the nearby island of Lobos earlier this month and which is threatening more than 200,000 sea lions in the area. Photograph: AFP

Pavement artists have the drop on the City of Light

PARIS DAYS

Our friend Sandra, an Irish woman married to a Frenchman, says that the *vrai parisien* pedestrian can always be distinguished from the visitor or newcomer. The unwary outsider stares up at the startlingly elegant buildings on every side. The Parisian always looks down. He or she is, from bitter experience, scanning the pavement ahead for dog poo.

Paris has a serious dog problem, more serious, it is said, than any other city in the world. Partly this is because it has more dogs - 300,000 - than any other city. But that is not all. Other cities, including other French cities, have taken aggressive steps to curb this urban scourge. Paris has adopted a policy of, as

it were, *laissez-faire*. It is not illegal for dogs to foul the otherwise impeccable pavements of known to man.

On my walk to work the other day I decided, in the name of investigative journalism, to measure the extent of the affliction. I counted 18 deposits in the first 30 yards. Walking to school with the children is a one-mile slalom course to avoid what Charlie calls, from grisly memory, the "squelchy ones".

Continuing my fearless inquiries, I uncovered several disturbing facts. Dogs leave 20 tons of faeces on the streets of Paris daily (who has weighed them, you ask. We will come to that later). An average of 650 people a year are hurt so badly after slipping on dog shit in Paris that they have to be taken to hospital. This works out at nearly two victims a day; broken collar bones are the most frequent injury.

The City of Paris pays £5m a year to a company, Delcaux, which operates more than 100 machines, resembling golf carts, called *caninettes*. Their job is to scour dog poo from the most affected pavements once or twice a day. (The normal street cleaning is supposed to take care of the gutters.) The *caninettes* make their most intensive rounds just after the morning rush-hour and just after the late film on television. Experience has shown that this is when owners and dogs most frequently resort to the public canine toilets, known to everyone else as the streets.

I contacted the technical director of the operation, Dominique Bellanger, who admitted it was not feasible to get around all the 1,500 miles of Parisian streets daily. His team, he said, concentrates on the "most polluted areas". (It is the Delcaux company which has measured the harvest from Parisian dogs.) The *caninettes* do a good job but, as Mr Bellanger concedes, the expectation that they will pass by encourages lazy dog-owners to use the pavements, not the gutters.

We are used to thinking of Britain as a nation of doting dog-owners, but we have nothing on the French. In the Bois de Boulogne on a fine Sunday, Parisians parade in their hundreds around the ornamental lakes, with every conceivable species of mutt, turning the Bois into some vast, open-air Crufts. The sentimentality which the French rarely bestow on one another is available sometimes for children and always for dogs. Paris, like California, has dog psychiatrists; even dog and cat astrologers. There are 80,000 dogs with private-health insurance in France.

Close to my office is a dog shop. In the window are dog mittens, fashionable dog coats, *haute-cuisine* dog biscuits, dog toys - including stuffed animals (pets for dogs?) - and packets of the "finest-quality straw from the Pays d'Auge" (*appellation contrôlée* produce for pets?).

There is not a pooper-scooper in sight. I inquired within. The shop did not sell them: no demand apparently, despite the

300,000 dogs living in Paris. Over the years, committees have been formed by the town hall to study the issue, scientific studies have been commissioned, and information campaigns have been aimed at dog-owners (encouraging more *fraternité* and less *liberté*).

Other French cities have, so to speak, stamped on the problem. Grenoble led the way in the 1980s with instant fines, prosecutions for persistent offenders, even the seizure of pets. At the same time, the city built 120 "sanitary dog spaces" and conducted a permanent civic-awareness campaign.

Similar policies, as well as a tax on dog-owners, were proposed to the city of Paris as long as eight years ago. They were rejected by the then mayor, who said such "repression" would not work and would penalise the old and the poor.

The mayor was, of course, Jacques Chirac, who is notoriously soft-hearted about animals. At one point the future president lectured dog-food

● An average of 650 people a year are hurt so badly slipping on dog shit in Paris that they have to be taken to hospital ●

manufacturers on the need to make their offerings conducive to drier and more compact dog poo. He was, it is said, reluctant to do anything which might offend so many thousands of dog-owning voters.

Nothing much is likely to change soon. Complaints about dog dirt are the third most frequent reason for letter-writing to the Paris town hall (ahead of fear of crime). But this has been true for many years now. The Agriculture Minister, Philippe Vasseur, will shortly present a law to parliament on the control of pets. It is aimed mostly at controlling savage dogs such as pit bulls and at the better regulation of cat and dog sales. It also proposes a free, if limited, veterinary service for poorer pet owners. There is no suggestion of a licence or tax to control dog numbers, as some had urged.

Non-dog-owning Parisians should console themselves with the wisdom of the 19th-century poet Gérard de Nerval, who provoked the dog lovers of his day by promenadeing with a lobster at the end of a pink ribbon. When questioned on his motives, he replied that lobsters "know the secrets of the sea, they don't bark."

He might have mentioned at least one other reason, in a crowded city, to prefer a crustacean to a dog.

John Lichfield

Strikers' threat to Prado show

Elizabeth Nash
Madrid

Spain's Prado museum has launched a spectacular exhibition of European art devoted to sensual pleasure. But the event prompted howls of pain from museum employees, anguished at what they call "conditions of absolute chaos".

Members of the museum's workers' committee interrupted the opening ceremonies this week by whistling and banging drums, and brandishing banners and stickers saying "Save the Prado". They plan a series of protest actions including strikes - although their leader, Antonio Solano, reckons a work-to-rule would be sufficient to bring the museum, housing one of the world's finest art collections, to a standstill.

More than 100 sixteenth and seventeenth century paintings, including four splendid Caravaggios as well as works by Titian and Bruegel, celebrate the pleasures of the five senses. Workers say the exhibition, "improvised at the last minute", was mounted with unprece-

dent haste, causing disruption throughout the museum. They say the accumulation of temporary displays and major repairs to the dilapidated building will close dozens of rooms.

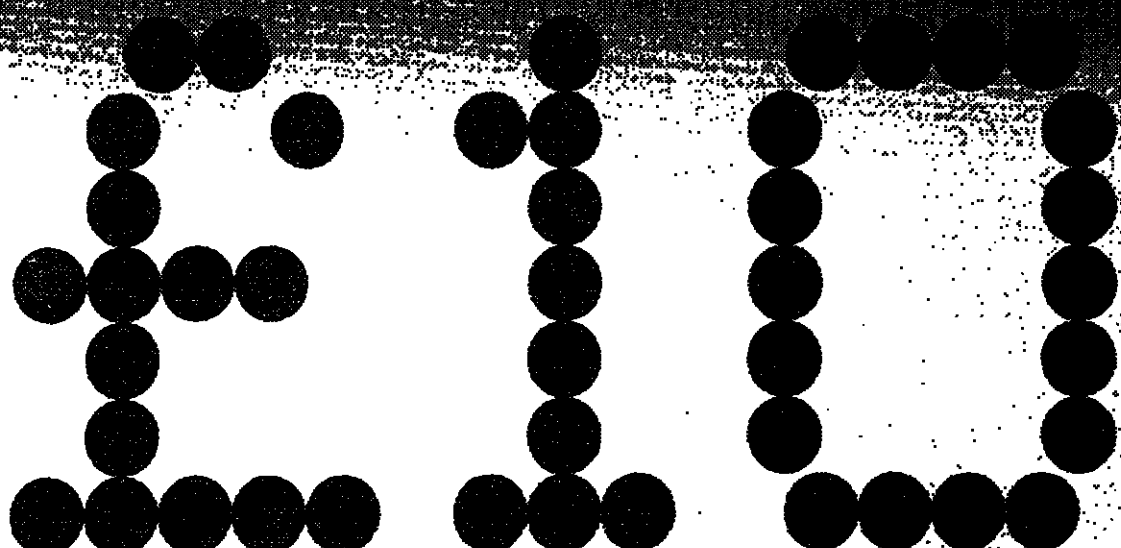
"For weeks visitors have been tripping over ladders and toolboxes, as workers have been driven to the limit, shouting to each other, banging, causing disruption that is totally inappropriate in the Prado," complained Alfredo Pineiro, a member of the workers' committee and a museum restorer.

Workers who have seen their numbers cut and wages frozen are "totally demoralised", Mr Pineiro says. They want some order to be put into the shamolic internal organisation of the flagship of Spanish culture.

It was, workers say, "madness" to mount such an ambitious project during major structural repairs.

A spokesman for the sponsoring bank, the BBV, said the exhibition had not figured in its plans for this year but was the result of an invitation by the Secretary of State for Culture, Miguel Angel Cortes.

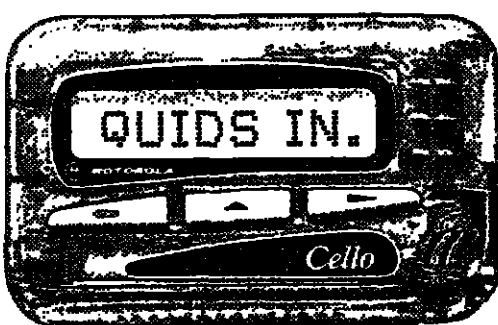
Buy a BT EasyReach messenger now and you'll get



Got the message? Well, with an offer as good as this we thought we ought to shout about it.

Purchase a BT EasyReach™ messenger during March and we'll give you £10 Cash Back.*

BT EasyReach messengers come in a range of colourful designs and because it's a BT EasyReach messenger there are no ongoing costs.



What's more, because it covers 98% of the UK population, it's now even easier to get contacted by all your friends and family wherever you might be.

For more information on the £10 Cash Back or to order direct, call **Freefone 0800 67 77 67**.

You'll get the message.

BT EasyReach

BT COMMUNICATION CENTRES, BT SHOPS, THE CARPHONE WAREHOUSE, CURRYS SUPERSTORES, DIXONS, PHONES 4U, STAPLES, THE LINK, SELECTED BRANCHES OF COMET AND POST OFFICE COUNTERS. Calls to a text messenger are charged to the caller at 55p per call at peak times (Mon-Fri 0800-1800) and 35p per call at off-peak times. Calls to a numeric messenger are charged at 25p regardless of the time of day. Calls from BT public payphones: mobiles: non-BT networks and those made using BT Chargecards are charged at different rates. All prices include VAT. *Open to UK residents aged 16 or over, each application must be accompanied with a till receipt featuring a BT EasyReach purchase. Offer: not open to employees of British Telecommunications plc or their marketing agencies. Prizes must be made on or before 31.3.97, applications must be received by 30.4.97. We will dispatch the £10 cheque and your till receipt within 28 days of receipt of your application. Promoter: BT Mobile. Arlington Business Centre, Milton Park Lane, Leeds, LS11 0NE.

هكذا من الأصل

Shameful echo of a forgotten holocaust

Robert Fisk reports on a tale of past terror and fresh injustice

For Gaspar Aghajanian, it is a matter of principle. For his wife Astrid, it all goes back to the day 82 years ago when the Turks piled the starving orphans of Armenia on top of each other in the sand and burned them alive.

"My mother saved me from the fire by pushing me under a pile of corpses," she says. "She used to tell me afterwards that when she heard the screams of the children and saw the flames, it was as if their souls were going up to heaven."

Astrid is now 83, her husband 85, but their battle - against another generation of Turks - is contained in a thick file of correspondence in their bungalow home in Shoreham-on-Sea, West Sussex.

No one comes well out of those fading letters and cuttings, neither the Turkish authorities in Cyprus who refused to compensate the Aghajanians for the property looted from their home after the 1974 Turkish invasion - on the grounds that they were of Armenian ethnic origin - nor the Foreign Office which failed to persuade the Turks to pay for their plunder, even though the Aghajanians are full British citizens.

"Deplorable," is how one Foreign Office letter - from Tim Eggar, then parliamentary under-secretary, - described Mr Aghajanian's situation in 1985. But it went on to admit that his claim would not be met unless there was a political settlement on the island.

What the Aghajanians lost in Cyprus - Persian carpets, furniture, an ancient coin and stamp collection, photographs of relatives since massacred, a piano, family letters and a large library of valuable books - would only amount to a few thousand pounds. The Turks originally tried to prevent the couple from receiving compensation for their retirement home in northern Cyprus - failing only because Mr Aghajanian was paid for the property before the Turks discovered that he was Armenian. But for Astrid and Gaspar - their families refugees from the Turkish twice in the same century - the refusal to compensate them for their possessions remains a mark of indignity and shame.

Their story explains all. Astrid's grandfather, grandmother and uncle



Waiting: Gaspar and Astrid Aghajanian at their home in Shoreham-on-Sea, Sussex, where they continue to fight for compensation from the Turks
Photograph: Andrew Hasson

were shot dead at the start of the 1915 Holocaust against the Armenians, the Turkish massacre that killed at least a million, and a half Armenians in what is now Turkey and Syria. Astrid retains faint memories of the long trek over the desert which the women and children were forced to make by Turkish police officers - robbed, raped, starved and burned to death across hundreds of miles of sand.

"At a village one night, my father, who had been deported, came to see us. He told my mother that he thought he was being allowed to say goodbye, that he would be shot with the other men. I remember my mother told me that my father's last words were: 'The only way to remember me [is] to look after Astrid.' We never saw him again."

On the long march south, Turks and Kurds attacked the column of women and children, carrying off girls for rape and forced marriages.

"My mother would run from one end of the column to the other each time she saw them attacking us," Astrid says. "My grandmother died along the way. So did my newly born brother Vartkes. We had to leave him by the roadside."

"One day, the Turks said they wanted to collect all the young children and look after them. Some women, who couldn't feed their children, let them go. Then my mother saw them piling the children on top of each other and setting them on fire. My mother buried herself and me under another pile of dead bodies. Even today, I cannot stand to be in darkness or to be on my own."

Astrid's mother, who was only 18, eventually carried her to a Bedouin camp and, after reaching Aleppo - with the help of a Turkish officer -

she married her cousin and moved to the newly mandated territory of Palestine, now ruled by the British. In 1942, Astrid met Gaspar, whose own Armenian family had lived in Palestine for generations and who

My mother saved me from the fire by pushing me under a pile of corpses

was shortly afterwards to become a magistrate. Fleeing the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948, both took refuge in Jordan - where Gaspar secured British citizenship - and then moved to the still British-administered colony of Cyprus.

Gaspar Aghajanian worked for 22 years for the United States radio-monitoring station on the island, re-

tiring to the bungalow the couple had built for themselves on the newly independent island.

"We never had any problems with the Turkish community," Astrid remembers. "Our housemaid was Turkish and we got on very well."

But when the Turks invaded in 1974 - after a Greek-Cypriot coup d'état - the Aghajanians were on the run again from their traditional oppressors.

"We thought at first that the Turks would be disciplined," Gaspar says. "They were no longer Ottomans - and they were a Nato force. Then we heard of a British couple who'd been beaten up in their home. That decided many of us that we should leave."

In a convoy of cars - the British actor Edward Woodward was flee-

ing with them - the Aghajanians made their way to the British sovereign base area at Dhekelia, and thence to Britain.

British residents who managed to return to Turkish-occupied Cyprus reported that the Armenians' home had been looted. "Front door broken and house searched by army. Contents strewn everywhere..." said one report.

The British Government refused to take responsibility for British property. Another letter to the Aghajanians said that "Alas, so far as I can judge, you must regard the contents of your house as entirely lost. The house itself, it seems, has been taken over by one of the newly arrived Turkish police officers, who has apparently cleared it and burned all papers."

Gaspar eventually received £15,000 for the house. But when he demanded compensation for the couple's possessions, he discovered

from the Foreign Office - in the words of Tim Eggar's letter - that "the Turkish Cypriot authorities had... enacted legislation to exclude claims made by those persons who were deemed to have Greek or Greek-Cypriot connections. They have now extended this exclusion to cover claims by persons deemed to be of Armenian descent."

"We were never Greek Cypriots and never asked for Greek-Cypriot passports," Gaspar Aghajanian says. "We were full British citizens but we were refused compensation on grounds of our ethnic background. And nothing has been done to correct this disgraceful state of affairs."

When he noticed in 1990 that Margaret Thatcher was to visit Turkey for ceremonies marking the battle of Gallipoli - on the very day that commemorates the start of the Armenian Holocaust by the Turks - Mr Aghajanian wrote to his MP, Richard Luce, to complain.

The British Government, came the reply from Francis Maude, then Foreign Office minister of state, "regard the loss of so many lives (in the Armenian massacres) as a tragedy..."

But, he continued, "we have long considered that it would not be right to raise with, or attribute to, the present Turkish government acts which took place 75 years ago during the time of the Ottoman empire."

All of which begs a lot of questions for the elderly Aghajanians. If the British Government will not even discuss the Armenian Holocaust with the Turks on the grounds that the present Turkish government was not responsible, how come they let the Turks discriminate today against British citizens of Armenian ethnic origin? Is this discrimination not directly linked to the 1915 Holocaust? And do not visiting heads of state discuss with the Germans the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews - and compensation for the survivors - without blaming the present German government for the atrocities?

"Our Holocaust happened a long time ago," Astrid says. "It is easy to forget us. And Gaspar still writes his letters. But still the Turks can get away with refusing us compensation because of our ethnic origin - even though we are British."

Shot in the arm for drug drive by Mexico

Bill Cormier
Associated Press

Mexico City - Mexican officials yesterday announced the capture of a drug lord responsible for tonnes of cocaine entering the United States, just before a US decision on whether to re-certify Mexico as an ally in the drug war.

The attorney-general's announcement came as Congressmen urged President Bill Clinton to deprive Mexico of its official status as a fully co-operative ally in attempts to curb drug smuggling. Such status means Mexico can receive US financial aid to fight trafficking. The State Department was expected late yesterday to announce Mr Clinton's decision on whether to certify the drug programmes of Mexico and 31 other countries.

Under arrest yesterday was Oscar Malherbe de Leon, head of the Gulf cartel, once ranked Mexico's second most powerful. A statement said prosecutors were preparing charges, including drug trafficking and possession. It did not say when he was captured. The arrest was another blow for the cartel, which grew from a backwoods marijuana operation into a booming operation under its now jailed kingpin, Juan Garcia Abrego. The statement said Mr Malherbe assumed the leadership after the arrest last year of Garcia Abrego, convicted in autumn by a US court of smuggling 15 tonnes of cocaine into the US. He was given 11 life sentences and fined \$128m.

Mr Malherbe's arrest is the latest in a flurry of last-minute disclosures before today's Clinton deadline to submit his drug certification recommendations to Congress. With US sentiment growing to deny Mexico status as an anti-drug ally, Mexico's navy burned a tonne of cocaine on Thursday in a public display of its resolve to crack down on trafficking.

North Korea reels after minister dies

Andrew Marshall

North Korea has lost another member of its old guard, adding to the picture of a crumbling regime. The country's state media reported yesterday that Kim Kwang-jin, 69, the country's vice defence minister, died of an "incurable disease" on Thursday. His demise came only days after Choe Kwang, the defence minister, also apparently succumbed to illness, suffering a heart attack.

The military has a key role in the country, and in particular in underpinning the authority of Kim Jong-il, son of "Great Leader" Kim Il-sung, who died in 1994.

But these are evidently not happy times for senior figures in North Korea. Given the lack of any reliable information from Pyongyang, it is hard to tell whether the cause is the winter, the worsening of the food situation, or something more sinister.

South Korean media reported that Kim Kwang-jin had been known to be ill for some time.

There has been a flurry of indications in the past few months that all is not well in North Korea. The prime minister was replaced earlier this year - apparently for health reasons. Chief ideologue Hwang Jang-yop, perhaps fearing a bout of dodgy health himself, defected to South Korea's mission in Peking, where he is still.

South Korea's efforts to persuade "China" to allow Mr Hwang to travel to Seoul have so far yielded no progress, but South Korean officials believe he may be released as soon as next week. Once there, he will have to be on his guard. This week another North Korean defector died after being shot.

The defection showed that near-famine and economic ruin are combining with a power struggle to make North Korea

a distinctly unhealthy place. All of these departures will accelerate change: they may be the product of Kim Jong-il's desire to force the pace as he tightens his grip on power. He has not yet formally inherited the vacant titles of state president and general secretary of the Workers' Party.

Michael Breen, a Seoul-based consultant on North Korea, said that Kim, having used the old guard to secure his grip on power, has now found them blocking his tentative moves to take the country out of hostile isolation and establish dialogue with the United States. "One explanation of why things are moving so slowly in North Korea is because of problems relating to the old generation," he told Reuters news agency.

In South Korea, too, these are troubling times for the ruling party. President Kim Young-sam is attempting to restore his political image after a damaging financial scandal and a national confrontation over a planned new labour law.

Yesterday, he began by replacing his chief secretary and three other top advisers responsible for political, economic and general affairs. "This is the start of a major reshuffle in the government and the ruling party," a Presidential spokesman said. "The cabinet reshuffle is expected early next week."

The President promised on Tuesday to deal sternly with anybody - even close associates and family - who was involved with corruption, and began by banishing his son, Kim Hyun-chul. Yesterday a high-ranking government intelligence officer was also fired after he was accused of providing classified reports to the disgraced son.

The South Korean parliament is also considering a new version of the controversial law on trade unions, but it is unlikely to be finalised before the end of next week. Unhappy with the pace of legislation, the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions - which is outlawed and independent of the official trade unions - had called for a half-day strike yesterday, but the response was tepid.



Strike out: South Korean workers marching in Seoul yesterday over a new labour law
Photograph: Reuters

Enquiries must be aged 18 or over. In order to safeguard our customers, certain transactions may require written confirmation. First Direct reserves the right to decline to open an account for you. First Direct credit facilities are subject to status. For written details of our services write to First Direct, Freeport, Leeds, LS98 2RF. First Direct is a division of Midland Bank plc. Calls may be monitored and recorded. LLOYDS Cheque Account details are based on the Classic Account. The costs comprise fees of 50 p per month. BARCLAYS Cheque Account details are based on the Barclays Bank Account. The costs comprise fees of 25 p per month. NAT WEST Cheque Account details are based on the Current Plus Account. The costs comprise fees of 25 p per month. All fees may vary in the future. First Direct variable interest rate for overdrafts up to £250 is 12.6% EAR. All information based on authorised overdrafts of 5 days or more per month and correct at 26 February 1997. Member HSBC Group

Why pay bank charges when First Direct is free?

We are the UK's leading 24 hour personal telephone bank, a member of the HSBC Group which is one of the largest banking and financial services organisations in the world. We never charge Cheque Account customers for everyday transactions, even if they're overdrawn. So banking with us costs much less.

Open all hours

We're always open, so you can do all your banking when and where it suits you. All calls are personally answered by our Banking Representatives and all UK calls are charged at local rates.

Free banking and much more

You also get a fee free £250 overdraft, the First Direct Card - guaranteeing cheques for £100 and allowing cash withdrawals of up to £500 a day from over 11,500 cash machines in the UK, including those of Midland - and a hassle free automated bill payment service.

Why pay more for other services?

We can satisfy your other banking needs - saving, borrowing, travel and insurance - by telephone too. As well as saving you money we provide better, more easily arranged services, so giving you real convenience and flexibility.

It's easy to join

We make changing your financial arrangements easy too. Easy to open a First Direct Cheque Account, easy to arrange for your salary to be paid in and easy for all your standing orders and direct debits to be transferred to your account. And it's easy to find out more right now. Call us on 0800 24 24 24 or complete the coupon.

Now ask yourself are you with the right bank?

call free 0800 24 24 24

or complete the coupon and post to:
First Direct, FREEPOST, Leeds, LS98 2RF

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms or Title _____
Surname _____
Forename(s) _____
UK Address _____
Postcode _____
Telephone No _____

Annual current account charges
(annual fees for use of £250 overdraft)

NatWest Current Plus	£108.00
Lloyds Classic	£96.00
Barclays Bank Account	£60.00
First Direct Cheque Account	£0.00

international

Coastal pollution makes Australian oyster-lovers sick

Sydney — Recently I took a three-day weekend and headed out of Sydney up the coast of New South Wales to try to enjoy a short, peaceful break while the Australian summer lasted. February in Australia is like August in Europe: get-out-of-town time. Peaceful it might have been, but there has been little peace of mind since I returned to Sydney. That is because oysters were a central part of my holiday plan.

On the drive to the small coastal town of South West Rocks, about 250 miles north of Sydney, I pulled in to Wallis Lake to buy four dozen of the area's famous oysters.

Oysters in Australia are abundant, succulent and ridiculously cheap. For the equivalent of £3, you can have a dozen of some of the finest oysters to be found anywhere.

Buy them direct from an oyster farmer, as I did, and you will often find when you get home that he has thrown an extra dozen in the bag for no extra charge. Coastal Aboriginals lived on oysters long before whites arrived. The foreshores of Sydney harbour and many towns are dotted with middens formed by centuries of discarded oyster shells.

Wallis Lake oysters are big business, and deservedly so. They have a taste all their own, and the farmers there have worked hard to build beyond their small community a market that now reaches across Australia and overseas. Wallis Lake

An outbreak of hepatitis A ruins Robert Milliken's enjoyment of a favoured dish

produces about half the oysters in New South Wales, Australia's most populous state.

When I arrived in South West Rocks, the ritual began. We opened the oysters ourselves, doused them with lime juice and put them out as the first course for our dinner.

"Excellent," pronounced John. "Wonderful!" said Stephen. "Mmmm," said I. "Robert, I think you should go back to Wallis Lake and get some more," suggested Bill. We quaffed our wine and laughed.

Barely a day after I returned to Sydney, I turned on the radio news to hear that Australia has had its worst outbreak of hepatitis A for 20 years, and that the suspected source of infection is Wallis Lake oysters.

More than 400 people are now infected in every Australian state but Tasmania, six times the normal infection rate for hepatitis A over this period. About two-thirds of them are oysters recently, and most of those appear to have come from Wallis Lake. A 77-year-old Sydney man who came down with the illness after eating

Wallis Lake oysters has died. The once-proud oyster business there has been devastated. The farmers have shut their doors, and millions of Wallis Lake oysters have been recalled from shops. Already, a Melbourne law firm is preparing a class action to sue whoever is found to be responsible.

Like many others watching the story unfold, my calm turned to shock and then outrage. Although the authorities have yet to prove it, there are strong signs that the infection came from sewage contamination of Wallis Lake during heavy storms in January and February. But there have been plenty of heavy storms in the past. Why now? Because some towns and villages around Wallis Lake, and its river tributaries, have old sewage treatment plants or no conventional treatment plants at all. This time, it seems, the whole system gave way under too much pressure.

The oyster scandal has raised a bigger issue for Australians of how they manage their coastal environments. Oysters have always been a symbol of the Australian good life: fresh, clean and plentiful. Yet more and more Australians are flocking to fragile coastal communities like Wallis Lake to escape city life faster than the authorities are able, or willing, to manage them. If Wallis Lake can become a no-go area, what about bigger waterways like Sydney harbour?

The scandal arose as thousands of people prepared to turn



Sea monster: A float for tonight's gay Mardi Gras in Sydney

Photograph: Reuters

front line for this year's clean-up. After years of cajoling authorities, he is incensed that sewage overflows still pour into the harbour after heavy storms. "The Sydney Olympic Games are only four years away," says Mr Kiernan. "Do we invite the world here and then tell them they can't go swimming for fear of catching a disease?"

As for me and my friends, we're all still standing. I'm just putting that strange twinge in the stomach the other day down to a change in the weather.

Aid workers flee as Zairean rebels seize key town

Peter Smerdon
Reuters

Nairobi — Zairean rebels yesterday seized the eastern town of Kindu and foreign aid workers fled a major eastern refugee camp for fear of rebel attack, aid agency and UN sources said. Rebels said they were four miles from Tingi Tingi but were delaying an advance for the sake of refugees.

The UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, encouraged by France, said he hoped to persuade member-states to reconsider sending a multinational force to eastern Zaire in light of a serious humanitarian situation.

A UN source said the rebels captured Kindu and its airport on Thursday but in Kinshasa a defence ministry official said Kindu, a transport hub and base for operations in the war zone,

remained in army hands. The UN source added that all 2,000 Zairean troops in Kindu fled without a fight after looting the town and were heading towards the town of Katoko-Kombe, 100 miles away.

Kindu had the northernmost working station on a rail line to South Africa. It also had a large airport used by the military. The aid officials said an immediate evacuation of all expa-

triatees had been ordered from Tingi Tingi, 160 miles north-east of Kindu, after camp leaders were warned that the camp would be attacked by another rebel force last night.

Aid workers said Zairean troop reinforcements and mercenaries arrived from the city of Kisangani in Tingi Tingi, backed by warplanes and helicopter gunships. Tingi Tingi has some 170,000 Rwandan and Burundian

refugees who fled earlier rebel advances. Meanwhile, Laurent Kabila, the rebel leader, was reported to have returned from exploratory peace talks in South Africa and headed for his headquarters in Goma. Some 500 Rwandan Hutus, including officers of the former Hutu Rwandan army, have escaped to Kenya from Tingi Tingi in the last two weeks by air at a cost of \$500 seat, Hutu sources said.

significant shorts

Clintons owe millions to Whitewater lawyers

President Clinton and his wife are technically "virtually bankrupt" as a result of \$2.3m (£1.4m) of unpaid legal bills from the Whitewater investigation, while the legal defence fund set up to raise money to cover them is so broke it is charging reporters \$2 a head for lists of donors.

According to the fund's latest six-monthly report, it raised just \$57,523 in the second half of 1996. The Clintons owe \$2.2m to the Williams & Connolly law firm alone for work on Whitewater. The President was "as a technical matter virtually bankrupt," his spokesman Mike McCurry said. But Mr Clinton expected to be "a young, vigorous and employable ex-president," and planned to repay his debts in full. **Rupert Cornwell — Washington**

Mercenary concern over PNG

Britain has complained to Papua New Guinea about its use of mercenaries against rebels in Bougainville. Jeremy Hanley, the Foreign Office minister, yesterday called in the High Commissioner from PNG to express his concerns. *The Independent* reported on Tuesday that Sandline International, a British-based company, was recruiting military advisers. Australian and New Zealand defence ministers also called on PNG to stop using mercenaries. **Andrew Marshall**

Yeltsin moves towards mercy

President Boris Yeltsin, taking another step toward abolishing the death penalty in Russia, ordered the Russian foreign ministry yesterday to sign Article 6 of the Human Rights Convention, outlawing capital punishment. Mr Yeltsin simultaneously ordered the justice ministry to work out measures to put this into practice, but set no timetable. **Reuters — Moscow**

Nuclear protest in Germany

About 1,000 protesters tried to block the transport of nuclear waste to a temporary holding site in southern Germany. Police said 114 people were detained when anti-nuclear activists blocked roads and a bridge as three nuclear-waste containers were transported by truck from Neckarwestheim to nearby Walheim in Baden-Württemberg state. Another container was brought by train to Walheim from Gundremmingen in Bavaria. Two more containers arrived from a nuclear waste reprocessing plant at La Hague in France. The containers will be loaded on a train for the trip to the nuclear waste storage site at Gorleben. **AP — Stuttgart**

India proposes to slash tax

The Indian government proposed slashing corporate and personal income taxes with a new budget plan.

Palaniappan Chidambaram, the Finance Minister, announced that the government planned to reduce the tax on domestic corporations to 35 per cent from 40 per cent, and to abolish a tax on dividends. Mr Chidambaram also proposed scrapping a 7.5 per cent surcharge on corporations. He added that the budget, which must be approved by parliament, would cut personal income-tax rates across the board and bring down the maximum rate to 30 per cent from 40. **Reuters — New Delhi**

Smokers' check

United States government regulations on cigarettes that went into effect yesterday require vendors to check the identification of all cigarette-buying customers who look younger than 27. The Food and Drug Administration rules are intended to thwart mature-looking youths under the legal smoking age of 18. Failure to comply could cost store owners \$250. **AP — Washington**

Cheaper mortgages.

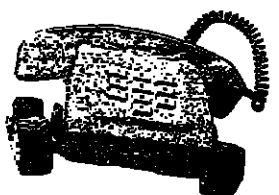
(Don't stop reading. There's more.)

*Mortgage example of £80,000 repayable over 25 years (300 monthly payments).

Lender	APR (Variable)	Monthly Repayments (after tax relief)	Monthly saving with Direct Line	Total Payable
WOOLWICH	7.7%	£560.60	£52.38	£168,180
HALIFAX	7.8%	£558.77	£50.55	£167,631
ABBEY NATIONAL	7.8%	£557.34	£49.12	£167,202
DIRECT LINE	6.5%	£508.22	—	£152,466

APRs based on Standard Variable Rate Repayment mortgages, correct at 13th February 1997. MIRAS has been calculated under current tax legislation which may alter.

- Save around £50* a month.
- Free legal fees if you transfer your existing mortgage.
- Free valuation.
- You can borrow up to 90% of the value of your home.
- No early redemption, arrangement or mortgage indemnity fees.
- We'll even guarantee to save you 20%† on your existing buildings insurance.
- To find out how much you could save, call now.



DIRECT LINE
MORTGAGES

0181 649 9099

0161 831 9099

0141 221 9099

LONDON

MANCHESTER

GLASGOW

CALL ANYTIME 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm Saturday. Please quote ref. IND94
http://www.directline.co.uk

Mortgages provided by Direct Line Financial Services Limited, 250 St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5SH. Direct Line mortgages from £20,000 to £300,000 are available for up to 90% of the property valuation or purchase price, whichever is the lower. Applicants must be aged 18 to 62 and Direct Line Financial Services Limited reserves the right to decline any application. Life insurance to cover the amount of the loan and security in the form of a first legal charge (Standard Security - Standard) will be provided by Direct Line. The property must be fully insured for the duration of the loan. All rates quoted are for standard variable rate mortgages. The mortgage valuation fee will be refunded to the borrower once the mortgage is set up (for the example quoted the fee would be £119). Direct Line will pay your legal fees, provided you complete the transfer of your mortgage on your existing home using our solicitors package. If you decide to use your own solicitor to carry out the work involved in the transfer of your mortgage and the fees amount to more than £200, Direct Line will pay the difference up to a maximum of £200. This is a limited offer and may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Written quotations are available on request. Some mortgages may require payment of a fee to the existing lender when being transferred. The guaranteed insurance saving only applies if your current insurance is arranged by your lender and is subject to the normal underwriting criteria and corresponding terms of cover. For your added security telephone calls may be recorded and the recording kept verbatim. YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT. Direct Line and the red telephone as wheels are the trademarks of Direct Line Insurance plc and used with its permission.

Go all over Down Under



Airtours offers a flexible choice of holidays to Australia from pre-planned trips for those travelling down under for the first time to holidays for the more independent traveller.

- MULTI-CENTRE HOLIDAYS FROM £939*
- FLIGHT ONLY TO AUSTRALIA FROM £499*
- AUSTRALIAN EXPLORER FROM £539
- AUSTRALIAN FLY DRIVE FROM £719*

SEE YOUR LOCAL TRAVEL AGENT OR CALL FOR A FREE 'AUSTRALIA' WINTER '97/'98 BROCHURE ON

01235 824428

Airtours
The Holiday Makers

مكتبة من الأصل



IMAGE OF THE WEEK

Calm once again on the Dee Estuary, Wirral, after the local waters had been stirred up by Thursday's by-election. A fisherman repaints his boat, already sporting a touch of fashionable New Labour red. Photograph by David Rose, taken with a Nikon FM2, 160ASA film, 300mm lens at 250th second at f8. To order a print of this picture - price £14 - phone 0171-293 2534



the long weekend

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 1 MARCH 1997

THE INDEPENDENT • SATURDAY 1 MARCH 1997

WORDS OF THE WEEK



Pat Williams, left, professor of law at New York's Columbia University, was attacked for her views and verbosity when it was announced she was to be this year's Reith lecturer. Here is an extract from her first talk this week

for ever, and so the child is left to the monstrous creativity of ignorance and wild imagination.

Again, I do believe that this unfortunate negotiation of social difference has much in common with discussions about race. Race is treated as though it were some sort of genetic leprosy or a biological train wreck. Those who privilege themselves as "unraced" – usually, but not always, those who are white – are always anxiously maintaining that it doesn't matter, even as they are quite busy feeling pity, no less, and thankful to God for their great good luck in having been spared so intolerable an affliction.

Meanwhile, those marked as "having race" are ground down by the pendular stresses of having to explain what it feels like to be you - why are you black? why are you black? why are you black? - over and over again. Or alternatively, placed in a kind of conversational quarantine of muteness in which any mention of racial circumstance reduces all sides to tears, fears, fistcliffs and other paroxysms of unseemly anguish.

This sad habitual paralysis in the face of the foreign and the anxiety producing. It is as though we were all skating across a pond that is not quite thoroughly frozen. Two centuries ago, or perhaps only a few decades ago, the lake was solidly frozen. And if, for those skating across the surface, things seemed much more secure. It was a much more dismal lot for those whose fates were frozen at the bottom of the pond.

Over time, the weather of race relations has warmed somewhat and some few of those at the bottom have found their way to the surface. We no longer hold our breath and we have even learnt to skate. The noisy racial chasm still yawns darkly beneath us all but we few brave souls glide gingerly above upon a skim of hope. Our bodies made light with denial. The black pond so dangerously and thinly icy with conviction that talking about it will only make things worse.

The Reith Lectures, 'The Genealogy of Race: Towards a Theory of Grace'. The next talk is 'The Pantomime of Race', on Radio 4, Tuesday, 8.30pm

The Reith Lectures, 'The Genealogy of Race: Towards a Theory of Grace'. The next talk is 'The Pantomime of Race', on Radio 4, Tuesday, 8.30pm

INSIDE

John Walsh meets Lesley Garrett

... who wants to talk about
anything but opera **page 3**

The enigma of Albert Speer

Charming, upwardly mobile, but unfortunately a Nazi **page 7**

PLUS

Games, crossword	2
Arts	4&5
Books.....	6,7,8
Travel	9,10,13
Outings.....	15
Country, gardening.....	18,19
Shopping	20,21
Motoring.....	22
Property	23,24
Personal finance.....	25-30
TV, radio reviews	31

Perhaps one reason that conversations about race are so often doomed to frustration is that the notion of whiteness as "race" is almost never implicated. One of the more difficult legacies of slavery and of colonialism is the degree to which racism's tenacious hold is manifested not merely in the divided demographics of neighbourhood or education or class, but also in the process of what media expert John Fiske calls the ex-nomination of whiteness as racial identity.

Whiteness is unnamed, suppressed, beyond the realm of race. Exnomination permits whites to entertain the notion that race lives "over there" on the other side of the tracks, in black bodies in inner-city neighbourhoods, in a dark netherworld where whites are not involved.

At this level, the creation of a sense of community is a lifelong negotiation of endless subtlety. One morning, when my son was three, I took him to his pre-school. My son ran straight to a pile of Lego and proceeded to work. I crossed the room and put his lunch box in the refrigerator, where I encountered a little girl sitting at a table beating a mound of clay into submission with a plastic rolling pin.

"I see a mommy," she said to me cheerfully. "That must mean your little boy is here somewhere too."

"Yes, he's here," I answered, thinking how sweetly precocious she was, "there, he's over by the Lego".

She strained to see around the bookcases. "Oh yes," she said, "now I see that black face of his." I walked away, without responding, enraged – and how can one be so enraged at an innocent child? – yet, not knowing what to say just then, rushing to get the jaggedly dangerous broken glass of my emotions out of the room.

I remember being three so well. Three was the age when I learnt that I was black, the coloured kid, monkey child, different. What made me so angry and wordless in this encounter 40 years later was the realisation that none of the little white children who taught me to see my blackness as a mark probably ever learnt to see themselves as white. In our culture, whiteness is rarely marked in the indicative – there! there! – sense of my bracketed blackness. And that majoritar-

ian privilege of never noticing oneself was the beginning of an imbalance from which so much, so much else flowed.

But that is hard to talk about, even now, this insight acquired only before I had the words to sort it out. Yet, it is tempting to think about this phenomenon in terms of the *unheimlich*, the uncanny, the good deal more we wrap around than these small examples. In a sense, race matters are matters and repressed in much the same way as matters of sex and scandal. The subject is considered a rude and transgressive one in mixed company — a matter whose observation is sometimes inevitable, but about which, once seen, little should be heard nonetheless. Race thus tends to be treated as though it were in a specially delicate category of social infirmity, so called, like extreme obesity or disfigurement. Every parent knows a little of this dynamic, if in other contexts

"Why doesn't that lady have any teeth?" comes the child's piping voice. "Why doesn't that gentleman have any hair?" and "Why is that little boy so black?"

"Sshhh," comes the anxious parental remonstrance, "the poor thing can't help it. We must all pretend that nothing's wrong."

And thus we are coached, upon pain of pun-

ishment, not to see a thing. Better be sure the parent faces an ethical dilemma in that moment of childish vision unrestrained by social nicety. On the one hand we rush to place a limit on what can be said to strangers and what must be withheld for fear of imposition, or of hurting someone's feelings. As members of a broad society, we respect one another by learning not to inflict every last intimate prying curiosity we may harbour upon everyone we meet.

That said, there remains the problem of how or whether we ever answer the question, and that is the dimension of this dynamic that is considerably more troubling.

"Why is that man wearing no clothes, mummy?" pipes the childish voice once more. And the parent panics at the complication of trying to explain.

The naked man may be a nudist or a psychotic, or perhaps the emperor of the realm, but the silencing that is passed from parent to child is not only about the teaching of restraint, it is calculated to circumnavigate the question as though it had never been asked.

"Stop asking such silly questions."

A wall begins to grow around the forbidden gaze. For we all know – and children best of all – when someone wants to change the subject, and

Why do more people go back to Cyprus than anywhere else in the Med?

NOBODY EVER GOES JUST ONCE

0171 734 9822
for brochure

Relaxing in another dimension

A new style of jigsaw may be a refuge from daily stress, says William Hartston

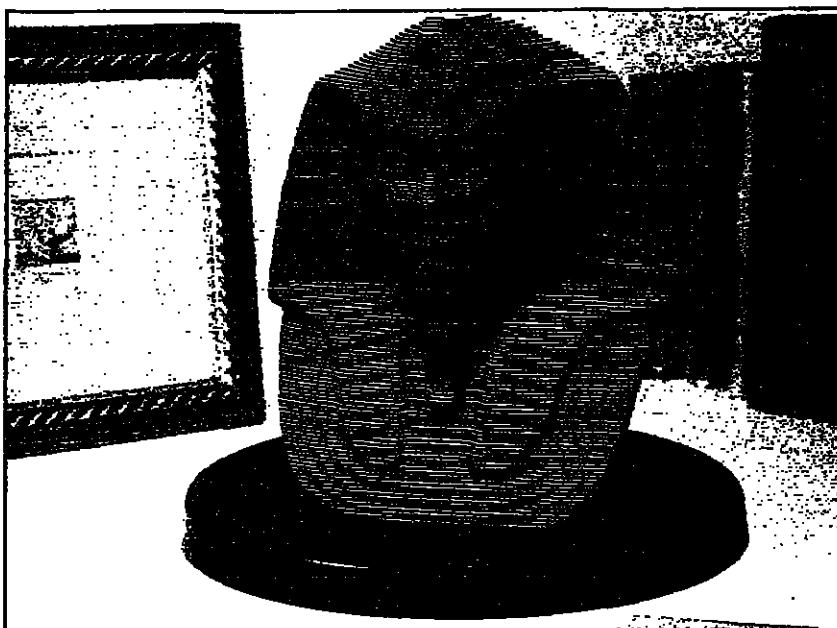
Just suppose, for a moment, that you were looking for a pastime that provided a real antidote to the stresses of everyday life. First, it would have to be non-competitive — bridge, backgammon and chess are all very well as comparatively harmless outlets for your innate aggression, but they can hardly be described as therapeutic; and as for such ostensibly fun games as Cluedo or Monopoly, we all know how they can bring out the worst personality traits of the more determined practitioners.

So competitiveness is out, but we do need something that is both slow and absorbing in order to offer a complete break from real life and occupy our attention for long enough to wind down from everyday pressures. Finally, it has to be perceived as something worth doing, so must offer a satisfying goal to serve as a reward for the effort involved. And if that goal can be achieved by a number of people acting in co-operation, then all the better.

Dr Jenny Cozens, who is a clinical psychologist and Principal Research Fellow at Leeds University, has identified something that she believes may satisfy all the above criteria: jigsaws, preferably three-dimensional ones. Endorsing the new "Puzz 3D" range from Waddingtons, Dr Cozens says: "Completing puzzles can be beneficial to many people, but the sheer complexity of 'Puzz 3D' makes it mind-absorbing, which can be an antidote to stress."

Hang on a moment, though. Don't jigsaws fuel frustration and lead to tetchy outbursts? "Has anyone seen a green piece with a red line through it I had it a moment ago oh for goodness sake who's been knocking pieces on to the floor no don't put your cup down there you clumsy oaf now you'll just have to put all that corner together again now where's that green piece gone again?"

As Dr Cozens adds: "The benefits of 'Puzz 3D' may also depend on personality type — for example, practical people are often good at puzzles, while those who are planners rather than doers will benefit from the concentration the puzzle requires." The delayed gratification offered by jigsaws, slowly and tangibly working towards the final achievement of finishing the puzzle, makes it particularly good for the "sensing" people among Jungian personality types. In contrast to modern computer games, which provide achievement overload through an orgy of zapping and pouncing, the sedate pace of jigsaws can teach children patience. And not only children. In an increasingly fast-moving society, when even the traditionally relaxing lunch hour has fallen victim to the ever more demanding pace of life, Dr Cozens believes that we may



'The Pharaoh', computer-scanned by Really Useful Games and cut into 140 slices

all benefit from an activity that encourages patience and an appreciation of the joys of delayed reward. "We only have to go shopping to see how impatient we have all become," she says.

Whatever reservations we may have about computer games, however, the successful launch of two different ranges of three-dimensional jigsaws owes everything to recent technological improvements. The real puzzle, for Paul Gallant, the inventor of 'Puzz 3D', was to find a way to hold a three-dimensional jigsaw together without glue or pins. The solution came from the unlikely source of British Petroleum, which was certainly not thinking primarily of jigsaws when it produced just the right type of polyethylene foam to enable the puzzles to hold together at their dovetail joints.

'Sculpture Puzzles', the new range from Really Useful Games, owes its inspiration to computer scanning techniques. Three-dimensional objects, from works of art such as the Venus de Milo or Rodin's *The Kiss* to commonplace things such as a head or a clock, are scanned by a computer that can then produce a series of cross-sections that pile up to make the original object.

The jigsaws are intelligently designed to offer the puzzler a choice of levels of difficulty. If you just want to put it together, there are "cheat" numbers on every piece that

let you, after doing a simple sum, work out the order in which they should be placed on the central column. Although not mentioned by the manufacturers, this element can also be used as a sneaky way to encourage numeracy in children. Mixing sums with jigsaws seems a perfect way to get small children to practise their arithmetic. The serious jigsaw doer, of course, will ignore the numbers and just work by sight and feel to try to get them in the right order. Finally, for those who want a real challenge, several of the pieces may be broken into three, so that each level becomes a mini-jigsaw of its own. The final jigsaw-sculptures are quite stunning, making highly attractive ornaments in their own right.

The Dutch historian-philosopher Johan Huizinga, in his influential work *Homo Ludens*, wrote about the absolute sense of order offered by games through their clearly defined rules and delineation of playing areas: "Here we come across another, very positive feature of play: it creates order, is order. Into an imperfect world and into the confusion of life it brings a temporary, a limited perfection. Play demands order, absolute and supreme. The least deviation from it 'spoils the game', robs it of its character, and makes it worthless. The profound affinity between play and order is perhaps the reason why play... seems to lie to such a large extent in the field of aesthetics. It may be that this aesthetic factor is identical with the impulse to create orderly form, which animates play in all its aspects."

Those words, written in 1944, seem particularly appropriate to account for the joy of jigsaws — the most fundamental example of turning chaos into order in the context of a game, though oddly enough Huizinga does not seem to mention jigsaws at all in his book. What Waddingtons' "Puzz 3D" and the "Sculpture Puzzles" from Really Useful Games have to offer, however, is completed puzzles that are considerably more attractive (and far easier to display) than the old-fashioned flat jigsaws.

In explaining the joy of finally completing a truly complicated jigsaw, compared with the instant gratification of other types of game, Jenny Cozens talks of "the difference between a detective story and Proust". The aesthetic pleasure to be derived from the new ranges can only be *La Recherche du Puzzle Perdu*.

The 'Puzz 3D' range from Waddingtons includes puzzles from 225 to almost 1,500 pieces, taking from 3 to 40 hours to complete. Prices range from £14.99 to £40. 'Sculpture Puzzles' from Really Useful Games. Completion time depends on your cheating capacity. Prices around £14-£30.

Games people play

Pandora Melly finds fantasy in a mine-field

Nicholas Hills, 59, architect

I used to have my ears rubbed off in rugby scrums. I haven't played for 50 years, but my little son plays a bit. He's very good at running, preferably away from things. He's just won the 100 metres at his school sports day. It was quite thrilling to see the rivalry between him and his friend Cedric. There was torture and strain, and a breakdown by Cedric who went away and sulked, but I suppose that's all right at 11.

I am nearly 60, so I may be forgiven for not doing anything. It's not just age; I'm actually quite slow at things, which is why I'm working this evening instead of gallivanting off to the delights of Cromer or Norwich.

Cromer is famous for its lifeboat and shanty men. The lifeboat is always rescuing people; it's probably out in this weather; we're having tremendous gales.

When I was little I was somewhat isolated; it was the war, you see. I had two imaginary friends, Mrs Schlanks and Mrs

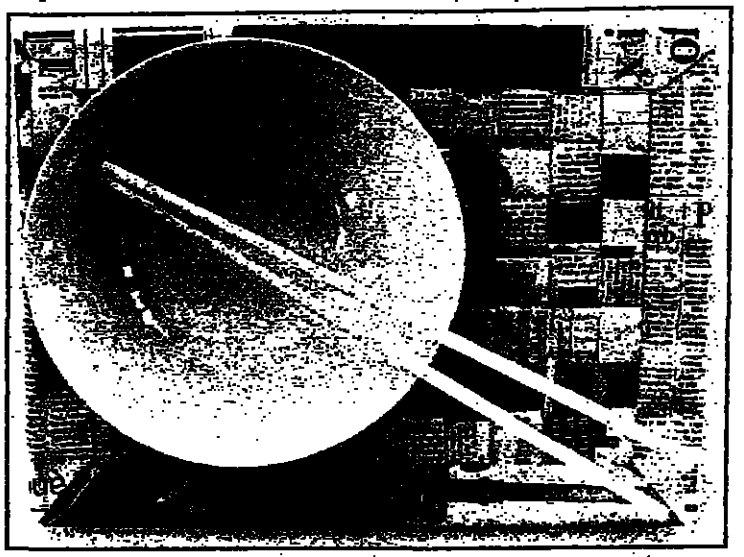
Schlanks, and they lived in a martello tower. I'm sure you wouldn't want to know about them. Well, they were ladies, weren't they? I can hardly remember anything about them. How old would I have been then? Five perhaps, or six. Does anyone have imaginary people today?

They weren't very interesting, except that their tower was a real one on the other side of a mine-field. I remember when my mother went completely frantic one day because a small friend and I had walked some distance through this mine-field to go swimming. No one believes this, but when young, my mother and a wild friend of hers jumped from the top of the tower on to the shingle below. Why they weren't killed I don't know, but they really did jump.

Annual membership of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, 'Storm Force' for children, £5; 'Offshore' for sea-going members, £40, including quarterly journal. Details from RNLI (01 202 663000).

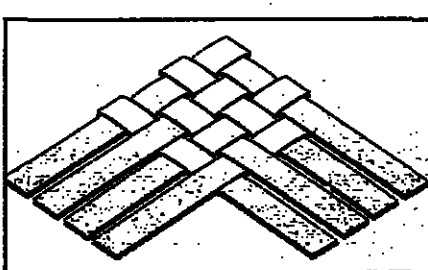
Don't junk it... use it

A practical use for newspaper columns



I have found countless uses for the newspaper mat, which is today's example of creative recycling. All you need is an old newspaper, scissors and a stapler, though I have found that a metre-long metal ruler also helps to produce a more finished product.

You start by folding the sheets of newspaper into thick strips. Just roll them up from one end then squash flat, if you're feeling lazy, or wrap them tightly round a long ruler, then remove the ruler.



Having created a sufficient number of chunky newspaper columns, you can interweave them, as shown in the diagram, to form the body of the mat, trimming them to the required size.

A modification of the basic rolling technique is needed for the elegant borders. For these, you take your sheet of newspaper and roll it up from opposite edges until they meet in the middle. This is then folded over the edges of the woven section and stapled into place, both covering the loose edges and fixing the geometry of the entire object. Use broadsheet pages for a mat to protect your floor from the waste bin, Tabloid pages for spill-absorbent table mats, and last week's *The Eye* for individual place-mats.

Bawn O'Beirne-Ranelagh

The games page is edited by William Hartston

Chess William Hartston

If you find yourself at a loose end in north London this weekend, you should drop in at the London College of Traditional Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (HR House, 447 High Road, Finchley N12) where three London grandmasters, Chris Ward, Keith Arkell and Neil McDonald, face three Chinese grandmasters, Wang Zili, Ye Jiangchuan and Feng Zaomin, in a challenge match between London and Peking. Until the Sixties, China did not participate in international chess. With their own Chinese Chess, as well as Go and other oriental board games, they showed little interest in the Western game. Chinese teams played in the Olympics of the late Sixties, but were seen more as a curiosity than a threat to the leading chess nations. Indeed it was not until 1974 that a Chinese player won a game against a grandmaster. I will remember the loser of that game, the urbane Dutch Grandmaster Jan Hein Donner, proudly maintaining: "Now I am the third most famous player in the world." Since his defeat would ensure that his name would be known throughout China, he reckoned that only Fischer and Spassky would be more famous.

In the Eighties, the Chinese became a real world chess power — but

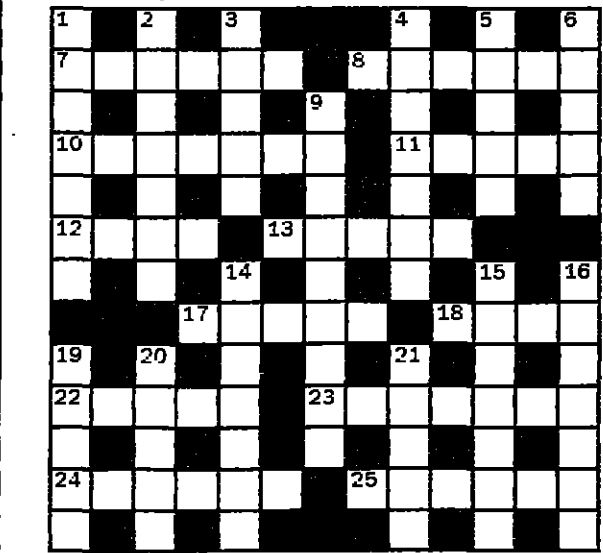
only in women's chess. Now their men are beginning to catch up. In the first round of the London-Peking match, the Chinese players, with the advantage of the white pieces on all boards, won 3-0. In the following game, Neil McDonald fell victim to an imaginative attack. After 27...Bg7, McDonald must have counted on 28.hg7+ Kh8 29.Bg3 when 29...f5! leaves him very much in the game. But when White spotted 28.Bxd5 29.Bxe6+! and 30.Rh3! Black was dead.

White: Ye Jiangchuan
Black: Neil McDonald
1 e4 e6 18 Bd3 Rf8
2 d4 d5 19 Rf1 Nd5
3 Nd2 c5 20 Bc4 Rad8
4 exd5 Qxd5 21 Rd3 g5
5 Ng3 cxd4 22 Qd2 b4
6 Bc4 Qd6 23 Rg3 bxc3
7 0-0 Nf6 24 fxc3 Bf8
8 Nb3 Ne6 25 b4 Bc8
9 Nbxd4 Nxd4 26 h5 f6
10 Nxd4 Bd7 27 hxg6 Bg7
11 c3 Qc7 28 Bxd5 fxe5
12 Qc2 Bc7 29 Bxe6+ Kh8
13 Nb5 Qd6 30 Rh3 Bxe6
14 Bf4 0-0 31 Nxe6 Rxd2
15 Rd1 a6 32 Rxf7+ Kg8
16 Nd4 Qc5 33 Rg7+ Kh8
17 Be5 b5 34 Rh7+ 1-0

... On the other hand, if you find yourself at a loose end this afternoon in central London, the place to go (in suit and tie, please) is the RAC in Pall Mall where the Varsity chess match is taking place. This year, it's Oxford against Cambridge.

concise crossword

No.3235 Saturday 1 March



ACROSS

- 7 Make secure (6)
- 8 Rowing crews (6)
- 10 Drain completely (7)
- 11 Building block (5)
- 12 Society (5)
- 13 Severe (5)
- 17 Causing irritation (5)
- 18 SE Asian language (4)
- 22 Large serving spoon (5)
- 23 Book collection (7)
- 24 Suitable for consumption (6)
- 25 Breakfast food (6)

DOWN

- 1 Crime (7)
- 2 Narrow neck of land (7)
- 3 Happen again (5)
- 4 Collective settlement in Israel (7)
- 5 Professional appointment (5)
- 6 Japanese city (5)
- 9 European capital (9)
- 14 Church tower (7)
- 15 Swindled (7)
- 16 Wheeled transport (7)
- 19 Having smooth, shiny coat (5)
- 20 Improvised (2-3)
- 21 Monastery (5)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Cocker, 4 Burren (Kookaburra), 7 Stronach, 9 Rite, 10 Jett, 11 Smeagol, 12 Lurid, 13 Nipper, 14 Salford, 17 Sevens, 19 Grand, 22 Bine, 23 Granula, 24 Turkey, 25 Horrid, DOWN: 1 Cornal, 2 Tanager, 3 Diphtheria, 4 Brou, 5 Waller, 7 Sicilian, 8 Snow, 9 Piglet, 11 Smeagol, 12 River, 13 Select, 14 Inform, 17 Scotch, 18 Digger, 21 Bunk.

Bridge Alan Hiron

Game all; dealer South

North
♠ J4
♥ 852
♦ A K 8 6 3 2
♣ 73
East
♠ K3
♥ K Q J 10 7
♦ 10 7 4
♣ A J 5
South
♠ A Q 10 9 8 7 2
♥ A 6
♦ Q
♣ Q 8 4

South congratulated East on his smart defence against Four Spades on this deal. Dummy agreed with that, but refrained from sympathising with his partner. See if you can spot why. South opened 1♠ and West overcalled with 2♥. Not a shy bidder, North showed his diamonds at the Three level and South jumped to 4♠ against which West led ♥K. Declarer won, overtook his ♠Q on the table, and discarded his losing heart on the other top diamond. There was little point in taking

the trump finesse at this stage, for if the defenders did not want South to trump a losing club in dummy, they would have to lead trumps themselves. So South led a club from the table. This was East's chance to shine. He went in with his unprotected king and, when it held, switched to a trump. The finesse lost, West played another trump, and now there was no way for South to avoid losing two more clubs to go one off. South's play would have worked if West had held both top club honours, even with the trump king wrong, but he missed a distinct improvement. After discarding his losing heart at trick three, he does better to ruff a diamond high and then lead clubs from hand. Now, if East wins and switches to a trump, declarer finesesses. The difference is that dummy's remaining diamonds are established and, indeed, if West leads a second trump, both of South's remaining losing clubs go away on the diamonds. And, if the diamonds had not broken 3-3, there would still have been the trump finesse in reserve.

Perplexity

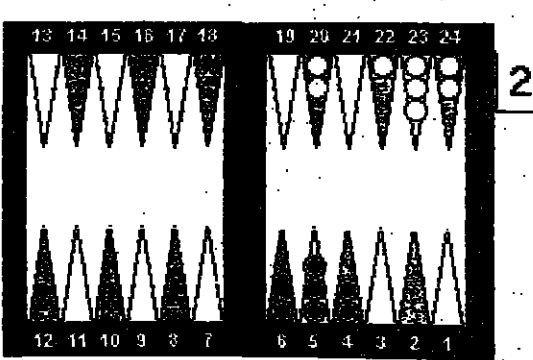
"How many pigs do you keep on the farm?" I asked professor Schweinefarer. "You'll need brains to answer that," he replied. "All I can remember is that the number of pigs is divisible by three. It's a five-digit number and the digits are represented by the letters SWINE where BRAINS plus BRAINS equals ANSWER. So how many pigs did the professor keep on his farm? The first correct answer opened on 12

March will win a copy of the new Chambers 21st Century Dictionary. Answers to: Perplexity, *The Independent*, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL.

15 February answers: Nectarines (inn creates), Tangerines (green satin), Grapefruits (furriest gap)

Winner: Mrs M Boyle (Consett)

Backgammon Chris Bray



Unlike London, where the Double Fives club is the centre of the backgammon action, New York has four clubs open seven days a week. Some of the world's top players can be seen in action and at least one of the chouettes I saw there recently was played at \$500 a point. Players were required to have \$40,000 in cash to join in — certainly not for the faint-hearted.

Alan Steffen, who will be familiar to many for his victory in the 1984 British Championships, has just opened his new club, the Ace Point. Professionally and hospitably run by Alan and his wife Lourdes, it provides games for all levels of players. The next few positions will be taken from some of my games there. To start, what could be simpler than a bear-off? White is on roll in the position above. Should he redouble to 4? If he redoubles should Black take? On the pip count White leads by 21 to 29. Based on this alone, White should double and Black should drop. However, there are other factors to consider. White has eight men to bear-off, Black only six. White has an even number of men and a gap on his 4-point so if he rolls a number like 4,2 it will cost him a full roll (it will take him an extra roll to bear off his men). And if White, for example, rolls a 6, he will bear a man off the 5-point, thus "wasting" a pip. Black may reach a position where he can redouble. Most of these factors benefit Black, but is it enough to take the double? Should White wait a roll because he may roll a 4? This simple problem has suddenly become complex. There is a way to solve it and others like it, as we shall see next week. In the meantime decide whether you would double as White and take or drop as Black.

The Ace Point Club can be found at 41 East 60th Street (5th floor), New York 10022 (212-753-0842). Internet: adslmt@prodigy.net.



Lesley Garrett: 'I want to get rid of all the stereotypes and put people straight about what opera is... modern, interesting, believable, contemporary'

PHOTOGRAPH: GLYNN GRIFFITHS

The eager diva

If the list of Things To Avoid Doing In Life is headed by "Playing Poker with Men Called 'Doc'" and "Walking into a Soweto Bar and Shouting 'Booy'", you'll find "Attempting to Patronise Lesley Garrett" pretty high in the batting order. Ms Garrett is a compact (5ft 4ins) lady from Doncaster with enormous grey-green eyes, an eagerly matinee manner and a conversational style that's a cross between Edwina Currie and Bet Lynch, switching from hectoring to flirtatious. She is the best-selling female opera singer in the country, the principal soprano at the English National Opera and the most ubiquitous trained voice in the country. She also has a reputation for enthusiastic self-promotion. Not even Nigel Kennedy in his most Stradivarius-chewing, "almond-stone" persona can hold a candle to Ms Garrett when it comes to self-publicity, whether it's being Gotcha'd by Noel Edmonds, turning up on Esther Rantzen's sink of lachrymosity, *Hearts of Gold*, or appearing in a variety of plunging frocks on her album sleeves. Even if your interest in the classical repertoire began and ended with "Nessun Dorma", it's likely you've come across Ms Garrett's divine larynx without realising it: she has sung on a dozen TV ads, her voice fluting behind the earboudn attractions of Ragù pasta sauce, Kenco coffee and the Renault 19 car.

A busy life, a life in the spotlights, the footlights, the best-seller charts. But Ms Garrett's celebrity has not, she says, been a smooth trajectory of acclaim. She's got where she is only by enduring the condescension of successive waves of horrible people: male chauvinists, Londoners, classical purists, opera directors, foreign directors, reviewers, prudes, the press... Nothing, in her headlong flow of conversation, was more heartfelt than the moments at which the word "patronise" surfaced. They reached a climax when she was talking about *Orpheus and Eurydice*, which

opens at the ENO on Monday with Ms Garrett playing Gluck's doomed, Hades-stranded heroine. The opera is choreographed and directed by Martha Clarke, "whom I love working with. Her currency is profoundly visual, she deals in texture, shape and colour, the way these things generate mood and emotion and therefore drama, but she leaves it to me to make the story, the drama, work. She doesn't feel she has to teach me, which is wonderful, it's so... not patronising."

Have you spent your life (I asked) being talked down to? "Argghhh!" Ms Garrett, who had been sitting cross-legged on a kelim footstool for the last hour, abruptly banged both fists on the material, releasing a cloud of Isfahan notes, and uttering a heart-breaking cry. "For being too Northern, too girlish, too tomboyish. For being too little, for being too sexy..."

One reason why some people refuse to take La Garrett seriously is her long-sustained crusade to bring opera to the people. Ever since 1989, when the ENO launched their meet-the-company corporate campaign with a huge photograph of Ms Garrett looking wanton in a long black dress, she has gone out of her way to demystify opera, to be Everyman's guide through the murky jungle of aria, recitative, coloratura and 20-minute death scene.

"I want to get rid of all the stereotypes," she says, "and put people straight about what opera is. You know the vast majority of people in this country still regard opera as elitist, highbrow, difficult to understand, full of enormous people screaming at each other in a foreign language; they think they'll have to watch stories they can't

relate to, being sung at prices they can't afford. I want to say, no, it's not like that, it's modern, it's interesting, it's believable, it's contemporary, and it's probably the biggest turn-on your imagination will ever have."

Phew. But why did she care whether people listened to music? Why did it matter if the majority of people in the UK never heard a single note by Gluck? "If they don't ever hear Gluck because of a misguided impression about the music, if they don't hear it because of a stereotype that they believe without ever questioning, if they don't ever hear Gluck because they imagine it will make them feel stupid - those are all things I abhor. Because it does matter. The wider everyone's artistic experience is, the better it makes you. It's part of the spiritual health of this country, and of our general well-being, to have as much exposure to as much art as possible."

Cynics might point to the 70,000 sales of Ms Garrett's album, *Soprano in Red*, and say that the more new listeners classical opera acquires, the more CDs the divine Ms G will flood. She deftly anticipates such criticism by turning the whole business of popularism and promotion into a style statement.

"It was with the ENO picture that I discovered how exciting it is to create publicity, and it's all part of the package; it's what I do. I find it fascinating to see what captures the public imagination. If you want classical music to have a future, you have to join the club and promote it, to compete with the audio-visual competition."

She readily admits the power of the image, even in the realm of music. "It was that picture of me in the ENO campaign that

started my record career. I got a recording contract because of that picture, and I thought, 'Hey, this is powerful shit'. The voice came into it second. Of course it rapidly became the most important thing - I wouldn't have done it otherwise."

You could watch her bringing opera to the people via Harry Enfield's *Guide to Opera* a few years ago, and a documentary with the *Birds of a Feather* girls Pauline Quirke and Linda Robson. You might have caught a TV "special" devoted to her work entitled *Viva La Diva* in April 1995. Nobody could have tried harder to change the image of the prima donna from that of a neurotic and demanding termagant to a matinee

spoof. Did she approach it differently? "I approach all the roles in exactly the same way," she says with a trace of asperity. "I ask: what is this character about? What's been happening to this woman, what's she going to do next? It doesn't matter if it's comedy or tragedy, it's always people undergoing a profound emotional change. I approach them all very seriously. It's just that some of them have laffs, and some don't..."

Laffs, eh? Did she ever worry that the lighter side of her nature got in the way of her interpretations? She did her brilliant, aren't-I-incorrigible smile. "Yes it does come out all

never encountered the bubbly Ms Garrett in full flow, in her zip-fronted red fleece and Buck's Fizz hairstyle.

I wondered how she went down outside England. Had she considered, say, a Wagnerian career? "No, I've never worked in Germany, funny enough. Never been asked, though I'd love to have a go. I rise to challenges with monotonous regularity. I did actually go to Vienna recently, and it was miserable." Didn't they like her voice? "They must have because they asked me to go and sing. They had me in mind for a part in something. They'd heard my albums, so I brought a whole variety of things. And the boss of the opera house screamed at me that I'd brought the wrong material." Abruptly Ms Garrett became a minatory Brünnhilde.

"We don't do zese songs in ziss house," he shouted, "Vy do you bring zese arias? I thought, my life's too short for this, so I just said, 'By-eee...'"

It all comes down to her childhood, about which she speaks with enormous warmth and animation. She grew up in Doncaster, where her father was a signmaster and autodidact. "He bought a tiny, derelict, dockside cottage by the side of a river just after I was born, did it up and we moved there and it was Paradise," she recalls. "Then, after my sisters were born, he realised he most wanted to work with children, and decided to be a headmaster. So he did a correspondence course in his signboard, and went around with a tape-recorder on his bike, and became head teacher at an infants' school, 'although he encountered a lot of sexual discrimination. It was pretty

unheard-of for a man to be in charge of tiny babies."

The family were, of course, egregiously musical, somewhere between the Partridge Family and the Von Trapps. "My father's a big opera fan - but there was a great variety of music around. Music wasn't a hobby of the family but of the whole area of south Yorkshire. What did her father sing? "He loved all Mario Lanza's stuff. And 'Danny Boy'. And the 'Miserere' from Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, that was a huge favourite, we sang that together a lot. It was wonderful to be so - uncluttered by television. We just had the radio and the piano. Mother sang and played the piano. And we didn't worry about compartments of music. I'd sing 'My Old Man Said Follow the Van', followed by Handel's *Messiah*, and not think anything about it. Then my father would write me a poem, and my mother would play some Bach on the piano. And my uncle would come round and play jazz on the saxophone. And I'd go to school and we'd do Benjamin Britten's *The Little Sweep*, and the next term we'd do *My Fair Lady*. It was completely normal to juggle them all together."

When she was 15, her Aunt Eileen took her to London for the first time and introduced her to showbiz, operatic and otherwise. "We went to a different show every night. I saw *Madam Butterfly* - I'd never seen an opera before. And a Tchaikovsky concert. I saw a musical called *1781*, which was extraordinary, and I went to *Abelard and Heloise*, which changed my life completely. Remembering how Diana Rigg (as Heloise) was loudly mocked for appearing sans clothing dur-

ing the play, I wondered if this had been the inspiration behind Ms Garrett's brief but notorious flash of naked bottom during a production of *Die Fledermaus*. "Something that amazed me when I whipped me kit off was that the reaction was exactly the same as with Diana Rigg 20 years before - that is, ridiculous, over the top. As if the papers had learnt nothing in that time."

The most interesting hiccup in Ms Garrett's rise came in 1982, when her first marriage failed and her voice packed up completely. She couldn't sing, couldn't hold a tune, could hardly produce a note - "maybe a tone, that was all. I just couldn't do it. I got a few jobs and bummed around, but I was really frightened. I thought I'd blown it and lost it for good. There was apparently nothing wrong but I just couldn't remember how to sing." She went to her singing teacher to rebuild her whole range of notes (it took, she says, years) but also saw a shrink. "The idea was that I was probably riddled with guilt - that I'd left my husband to pursue my career - and had taken my voice away to punish myself. It all sounded a bit Californian, but it was interesting and I discovered a lot about my own resilience..."

As she bustles about her large and airy house in the fashionable end of Highgate, where she lives with her second husband Peter and their children Chloe and Jeremy, it's hard to imagine this strong, unshakably optimistic woman being bothered by guilt. You get the impression she has learnt to handle psychological stresses with the same aplomb that she handles critics, opera house bosses and Viennese snobs. Lesley Garrett has become such a force of nature, in her music-for-all crusading, her spot-the-diva self-promotion, her popular albums of crossover songs, that you leave her with the impression of a woman endlessly forging ahead. As if stopping to think, or to look back, might leave her, like Eurydice, becalmed in regions quite alien to her jolly spirit.



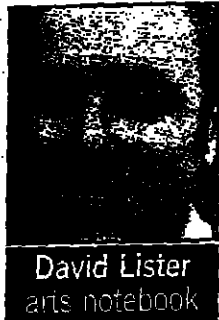
John Walsh meets... Lesley Garrett

hoydenish sexpot-next-door. But the downside of all this in-your-lap democratising was a suspicion in the mind of some commentators that Ms Garrett was a little too un-purist to be an authentic classical singer. I remarked that she'd played Eurycleia at the ENO before, in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*, and that Gluck was a radically more stark and serious proposition than the operetta king's high-kicking

the time, whether I like it or not. It's just kind of there. There's no character in history that hasn't got a lighter side, that hasn't some humour somewhere; but whether they're allowed to demonstrate it within the confines of the role is another matter." The windy figures of Jos, Metternich, Gladstone, Disraeli and the Revd Ian Paisley briefly wandered through my head, looking for their "lighter side" - but then they'd

Question: Which world leader is a closet movie buff? Answer: President Bill Clinton. That should relax America a little. After all, some of his predecessors have had far worse fetishes. It seems the President retires to his private movie theatre in the White House at least once a week, sometimes with the family. And his taste is a notch above the latest Hollywood fare. *Shine* was one private showing he raved about to friends, anticipating its critical acclaim.

According to Clinton's friend, the American producer Harry Thomason, whose film *Sling Blade* has an Oscar nomination, the President "sees more movies than most critics watch, with screening rooms at the White House and Camp David. The family watches many double features." Thomason adds, admit-

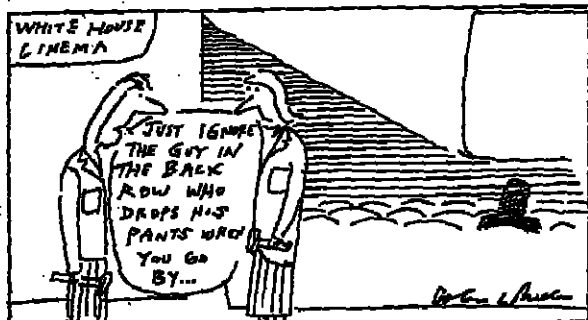


David Lister arts notebook

tedly not exactly disinterestedly, "The movie he has been pulling for now is *Sling Blade*, since both he and Billy Bob Thornton are from Arkansas." The phrase "pulling for" is an interesting one. Not exerting undue pressure on the upright gentlemen and ladies of the Academy Awards Committee, I trust.

Sling Blade is the story of a retarded Arkansas man released from an asylum for the criminally insane, to return against his will to society. Billy Bob Thornton, it should be explained, is the film's writer, director and star and was a surprise nomination for Best Actor in the Oscars. Before becoming an

actor, he did actually work on a Clinton highway crew in Arkansas, clearing brush, with a sling blade. Thornton, who still lives in Arkansas, remains friends with the President. His latest directorial venture is filming *Primary Colors*, the thinly disguised novel about Clinton's early days with a protag-



onist who was volatile and not always faithful to his wife. In a spirit of true southern friendship, Thornton consulted his chum in the White House to get his blessing before taking on the movie adaptation of the book. Their discussion remains private. But Thornton loyally admits to having "toned down the book a bit".

"So how did you get into acting?" just occasionally produces a memorable response. It did at a recent awards lunch when I was seated next to Ricky Tomlinson, the bearded Liverpudlian who gave a searing performance in Jimmy McGovern's TV dramatisation of the Hillsborough disaster, and who is shortly to star in the film *Mojo* alongside Harold Pinter in a rare screen role. Tomlinson told me

that he was one of the Shrewsbury Three (an all-but-forgotten episode during the Heath government in which three building workers were jailed for illegal picketing in 1972). He was the shop steward and served two years in prison. When he came out he was blacklisted by the building trade and made his living doing stand-up comedy, something he had fantasised about in jail.

He still does regular stand-up to the accompaniment of his banjo and assorted hecklers, in Liverpool's Atlantic pub. He didn't have his first acting role until he was 40, and walk-on parts led eventually to roles in *Brookside*, *Cracker* and *Hillsborough*. Actor, wisecracker, banjo player and one-time political prisoner... why the chat show circuit hasn't discovered this guy is a mystery.

Lisa Anderson, the music industry consultant and *eminence grise* behind this week's Brit Awards, at least found that organising the bash this week did not cause her to throw up with nerves, as she has done on two occasions in her career. One was when she was appointed MD of RCA Records, the first woman to rise so high in the industry.

The other was when Richard Branson told her to go to court to give a character reference for Johnny Rotten. Mr Rotten was up for assault. She looked at the two six-footers he was supposed to have hit, looked at five-foot-six Rotten and told the magistrate: "He couldn't possibly have done it. He's so fabulously, gloriously weedy." Rotten got off. Lisa was promoted and punk died.

arts & books

Ins and outs of Scottish Highland dancing

Why isn't *La Sylphide* performed more often? Created in 1832 by Filippo Taglioni to showcase his daughter Marie's revolutionary pointe-work, the ballet was reworked in 1836 by the Danish romantic Auguste Bournonville and it is this version that usually survives today. Or does it? You can see it regularly in Paris or New York or Copenhagen, but this jewel of the romantic repertoire hasn't adorned the London stage since ENB last did it in 1989. Scottish Ballet are currently touring with a production that reminds us why this neglect is such a scandal.

The lean, two-act tale tells of James, a young Scottish bridegroom beguiled by a passing Sylph on the eve of his wedding. A local hag brews an enchanted scarf which James believes will bind the elusive Sylph to him – big mistake. Scottish Ballet has performed the work since 1973 and the current restaging is by the former Royal Danish ballerina Sorella Englund. On Wednesday, Johan Kobborg, a young Danish virtuoso, acted the role of James with eagerness and melancholy and danced it with a brilliance that few British dancers could match. His

BALLET *La Sylphide*, Woking; Highland Fling, The Place, London

partner was fellow guest Tamaru Rojo, who imbued the Sylph with a mixture of mischief and other-worldly innocence. The role of the vengeful crone Madge often degenerates into ham, but Sorella Englund conveyed the spite and menace of the character with an air of normality. Although eccentric, she would not be out of place at a Highland wedding – like a ghastly auntie who always gets legless but has to be invited. The corps formed Bournonville's sculptural ensembles – as deft and artful as a clutch of cherubs on a ceiling.

These treats seemed a tiny bit wasted on Woking. Wednesday's audience was thin and Kobborg's performance, which would have blown the socks off Covent Garden, was greeted with village-cricker applause. The boneheadedness of this response was highlighted by the knicker-wetting screams greeting the evening's other piece, Robert North's butch ballet *Troy Game*.

Matthew Bourne's 1994 version of *La Sylphide* might have gone down better. *Highland Fling* relocates the ballet to an

absurdly plaid pad in a Glasgow high-rise, and the Sylph is a grungy walf who symbolises the anarchic pleasures of James's chemical dependence. Her hands may be demurely crossed but they are pawing at her crotch.

The second act has worn better than the first. Bourne's five grubby sylphs show distinct flashes of what he would later achieve with his corps of male swans, and we glimpse the choreographer's ability to flip from farce to tragedy. Bournonville's Sylph dies as the baleful scarf enfolds her and the fairy wings drop from her waist. It's a terrible moment, but its full impact requires an audience in tune with the romantic sensibilities and able to appreciate the tragic loss of immortality. Bourne's Sylph dies when James, eager for gratification, bloodily amputates her wings, a *coup de théâtre* that takes a short cut to our emotions.

Highland Fling: tonight, The Place, London WC1 (387 0031); then Wed-Sat, Midlands Art Centre, Birmingham (0121-440 3838). Scottish Ballet double-bill: 29 Apr-3 May: The Swan, High Wycombe (01494-512000); 20-24 May: The Lyceum, Sheffield (0114 276 9922)

The reality myth

Paul Taylor catches a rare sight of 'Cymbeline' and 'Camino Real' at Stratford



Casanova meets the Lady of the Camellias: Peter Egan and Susannah York in 'Camino Real'

PHOTOGRAPH BY KYLE

Voices raised in protest – but ever so politely

Good idea in principle: naff in practice. For Wednesday's concert at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Women's Playhouse Trust had brought together a collection of women writers, composers, a visual artist, a director and sundry performers to create a contemporary response to the obscenity of war, racism, dispossession and displacement.

Passages, comprising 20 newly commissioned songs, was the result, performed end to end in two parts. But why should the effect have been so muted? Was it the dominating presence of an enormous, white, bed-like structure – slightly Ikea-style, but also reminiscent of Claes Oldenburg's soft sculptures – on which the five women singers swayed and tottered? Surely not the surface for angry protestation or passionate discourse. And the "politeness" of the OEH seemed so desperately at odds with the subject matter – isn't *Passages* a show for angry, empty warehouses where tickets are cheap and the communication simple? Two-foot-square programmes (at £4 a shot) do nothing but aggravate adjacent punters, and text that requires a magnifying glass is not best served by low lights. In the Stygian gloom, poets

CLASSICAL *Passages*, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London

and composers' names were impossible to decipher and poems impossible to read – hardly the stuff of earnest protest. For this seemed to be the problem – the basics, like the need to hear words, had all been forgotten. Time and time again, into a black hole went those words, a pity since the poets included some well-known names: Katie Campbell, Jackie Kay, Deborah Levy and Jo Shapcott.

The roll-call of composers – Ruth Brychmore, Jane Gardner, Priti Paintal, Roxanna Panufnik, Ilona Sekacz and Errollyn Wallen – should have provided considerable variation. But the final outcome, with scarcely an exception, was a deadening similarity. The estimable Endymion Ensemble, with whom the WPT has successfully collaborated in the past, provided a set sound – in the main jazzy – with clarinet/sax, percussion, piano/synthesiser, string bass/electric guitar, violin/viola and gamelan, which contributed to the monotony. Ilona Sekacz's "Eight Gallons of Water" (text by Katie Campbell) stood out for its melancholy, meandering round a slow

waltz, picked out on synthesiser, as four women sang to each other atop the bales of the bed, like some perverse haystack.

"This Little Piggy" by Jane Gardner, again to a text by Katie Campbell, attempted to harness the terror and dislocated pain of confrontation with faceless bureaucracy: Jenny Miller was a touching proponent. "The Old Nag Explains Herself" (text by Jo Shapcott, music by Ruth Brychmore) seemed heartfelt, but what was being sung? "Shit in Her Eyes", by the most gifted of the crowd, Errollyn Wallen, to a text by Deborah Levy, began the second half, raunchily sporting Angie Brown in high-energy rock mode. But lit in red? A little clichéd, perhaps. And what standard props: battered suitcases, battered shoes, black trenchcoats, white headscarves. Here was tabloid politics, hereof satire, lacking in bite, a cry too far from the bitter worlds of Weill. Eisler or Shostakovich.

Wasfi Kani conducted; Jules Wright directed; other (able) singers were Ann-Marie Sands, Lynne Davies, Tinuke Olafimihan, Angie Brown and Hyacinth Nicholls.

Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and Tennessee Williams' *Camino Real* are not the sort of plays that cause stampedes to the box-office, so, with the opening of both this week in Stratford, the RSC can't be accused of playing safe with repertoire. Towards the end of the Williams, one of the characters is moved to allude to the famous TS Eliot line that "Humankind cannot bear very much reality". After seeing these two works on consecutive evenings, you feel that it is humankind's capacity to tolerate unreality that has been diligently tested.

A virtuoso exercise in total incongruities and discrepant emotional extremes, *Cymbeline* juxtaposes the wildly improbable and the piercingly heartfelt, the beautiful and the grotesque. This is pushed to the limit in the scene where the heroine Imogen, believed dead, is laid next to a decapitated corpse. When she comes round, the clothes trick her into thinking that this grizzly object is her husband. The audience knows that it is, in fact, her nasty, ridiculous step-brother. Cloten, so her speech of stricken recognition is delivered in a context pregnant with black, bad-taste comedy.

The greatest asset in Adrian Noble's main-stage production at Stratford is Joanne Pearce, who, in the role of Imogen, has the flexibility to present her at some moments with a kind of warm, playful detachment and, at others, with a stunning emotional raptness.

In this heavily cut version of the play, pre-nuclear Britain and the Rome with which she is in conflict over tributes have been given a strongly oriental look – Two Little Maids from School meet the *Seven Samurai* in a bare blue box within which a huge, sail-like white sheet is raised and lowered to define the various locations. Characters trip on and off via a ramp that extends down one of the aisles. Notwithstanding all this distancing exoticism, *Cymbeline*'s lost sons – played with a droll, artful artlessness by Richard Cant and Jo Stone-Fewings – speak with the broad Welsh accents of the wilds where they've been reared.

Noble makes the complicated proceedings unusually clear – the mind-knotting expository dialogue between the first and second gentlemen at the start has been recast and reduced to a scene-setting narrative told by the soothsayer to a nomadic tribe sitting round a flaming dish. This puts the production on the right fable-like lines. Shades of the Victorian pantomime villain are perhaps evoked too strongly in Paul Freeman's smooth dastard of a *Iachimo*, but Guy Henry interestingly turns Cloten into an effete class-conscious dimwit who – in a way that is almost pathetic – knows deep-down that he is a born loser.

Tennessee Williams once revealed that he got the germ of *Camino Real* from the sudden fear he briefly experienced, as he watched a torch-carrying procession in

Mexico, of Dying in an Unknown Place. In *Camino Real*, that place has become thoroughly mythical: a desiccated, out-of-time, central American coastal town, with a desert beyond its ancient walls. Stranded here are a group of romantic non-conformists from history and literature, who are all presented as well past their sell-by dates (they include Casanova, Marguerite Gautier, Don Quixote and Lord Byron). They are joined by another has-been, Kilroy, an American vagrant who was once a champion boxer but who has had to ditch his career because his heart is "as big as the head of a baby".

Darrell D'Silva brings Kilroy engagingly to life in Steven Pimlott's atmospheric, bustling, and endless-seeming production. But, as a play about the fate of the romantic in modern society, the piece can only offer an inert allegorical conflict between characters who have an unearned poignancy by virtue of their contrived temporal position and caricature baddies.

Moving performances from Susannah York as Marguerite and Peter Egan as Casanova did not prevent the experience of watching this long and heavy-handed play from feeling like a chore. It's the kind of work you can enjoy the virtue of having seen. Once. *'Cymbeline'* is at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre; *'Camino Real'* at the Swan. Both in rep. Booking: 01789 295623

NEXT WEEK IN



THE INDEPENDENT

MONDAY DEEPAK CHOPRA

the richest guru in the West. Has Hillary Clinton and Michael Jackson in his thrall but not our new interviewer Deborah Ross



PLUS MEDIA+

Our new 28-page section that has everything the press, television and advertisers throw at us. And why.

TUESDAY NETWORK+

Cutting edge know-how on computers and IT

THURSDAY EDUCATION+

Our unbeatable section for everyone who educates, is being educated or cares about education

ON THE ARTS PAGES THIS WEEK interviews with Rostropovich, Anthony Minghella and Luther Vandross

THE INDEPENDENT IT IS...ARE YOU?

STEPHEN VAUGHAN			
	THE FILM	THE PLAY	THE EXHIBITION
	The Portrait of a Lady	King Lear	Lovis Corinth
overview	Jane The Piano Campion directs Nicole Kidman, John Malkovich, Barbara Hershey and Martin Donovan in a big-budget, glossy adaptation of Henry James's 1881 novel of Americans abroad in which the innocent Isabel Archer rejects suitors only to marry a fortune-hunter. Cert 12, 144 mins, at the Lumiere, London WC2 and across the country	Ex-Theatre Clwyd director Helena Kaut-Howson goes to Leicester (where Lear is buried) for Shakespeare's cross between a state-of-the-nation play and a domestic tragedy with Theatre de Complicite's Marcello Magni and Kathryn Hunter as the King. At the Leicester Haymarket, (0116-253 9797) to 15 March	Canvases, etchings and drawings in a long overdue retrospective of Lovis Corinth (1858-1925), who fell in and out of favour with the German authorities, was a pioneer of German Impressionism and whose work also straddles Symbolism, Realism and Expressionism. At the Tate Gallery, London SW1 (0171-887 8008) until 5 May
critical view	Adam Mars-Jones declared it not "the shining success that might have been hoped for" a gifted director has lost her grip on a mightily elusive novel. "Frustrating. Punctuated with greatness ... it meanders through its narrative corridor like a blind man – oblivious to the human dramas going on around it," ummed the <i>Standard</i> . "She takes a poor departed author and tries to shake his work into a polemical life it never had and a psychological hindsight it would never have sought," admonished the <i>FT</i> . "As cinematically intelligent as it is faithful to the original ... immensely assured," yelped <i>Time Out</i> .	Paul Taylor, a Kathryn Hunter fan, was grievously disappointed by the production, set in a bleak, modern nursing home with Hunter offering, "as mannered and distancing an impersonation of male old age as Clive Dunn's used to be in <i>Dad's Army</i> ". "Though <i>Lear</i> is a big enough play to withstand Kaut-Howson's inane attentions, it's often a close-run thing," seethed <i>The Telegraph</i> . "Hunter's performance is strong enough not to demand any framing apology ... but she is imprisoned by the concept," chastised <i>The Guardian</i> . "Play and production fail to gel ... the play needs depth, not show," snorted <i>The Times</i> .	Tom Lubbock was enraptured by the late works. "When you come to these, you see the point of Corinth. The preceding work becomes interesting mainly because it's by the man who did these." "If not a great master in absolute terms, certainly a ... maverick whom even the British should admire," opined the <i>Standard</i> . "Will ensure that his stubbornly individual achievement is honoured in Britain at last," admired <i>The Times</i> . "Imitating waywardness ... some flashes of real painterly invention, and an awful lot of unconvincing painterly bluster," complained <i>The Sunday Times</i> . "So many thumping grandiosities," spluttered <i>The Observer</i> .
our view	Very beautiful but the poster looks like Kidman has a headache, which says a lot.	Hunter succeeds towards the end of the play but the production never takes wing.	It's worth going round backwards to recognise the strength of the later, greater works.

سكزا من الأصل

The best seat in the house

David Benedict asks Simon Curtis, chief producer of BBC2's *Performance* season, to name five good reasons why staying in is the best way of getting to the theatre

It's like *Opal Fruits*: the cast lists alone are made to make your mouth water. Fiona Shaw, Donald Sinden, Adrian Lester, Sheila Gish, Mandy Patinkin, David Bamber, John Sessions... directors such as Deborah Warner, Roger Michell and Sam Mendes aren't exactly small fry either. Were this a theatre season there would be a glamorous press launch and a box office advance you could retire on but, unless you are a *Radio Times* junkie, you probably know nothing about it.

"It does aggravate me that Ian Holm does a *Performance* play, and nobody says a word; then three weeks later he opens at the National, and gets two pages in *The Evening Standard*. I don't quite understand that," Simon Curtis, executive producer of the BBC *Performance* season of stage plays on television, is a benign man but there's an altogether reasonable level of irritation beneath the surface.

Curtis's problem stems from the peculiar relationship between theatre and TV. You only have to watch the Olivier Awards, replete with lifeless, hurriedly taped clips from the hits, to realise that theatre on TV is a dodgy game. The lighting looks flat, the camera excludes reactions from others on stage and performances never conceived for the ruthless eye of the camera are thrust into close-up. Cross-cultural mixing may be the stuff of post-modern life, but high culture in a low culture art form often ends up looking like the worst of all possible worlds.

Classical music has it easy. Televising orchestral concerts is a cinch by comparison. The visuals are usually a complement to good music from a good seat and, with decent camera set-ups, the opportunity to see a conductor at work rather than staring at flapping coat tails is a bonus. On the other hand, most opera broadcasts degenerate into "Event TV": thrill to Domingo in the comfort of your own home. It's a case of never mind the quality, feel the occasion.

The costs of creating opera in the studio are generally prohibitive, which means live broadcasts from venues. In technical terms, the frankly unsightly physical exertion of singing and the fact that few singers are likely contenders for Best Actor nominations renders close-ups almost impossible. All of which gives you static camera work, disengaging long-shots and largely unusable

factory results. Fine for fans, but unlikely to hook the casual viewer.

Theatre is more malleable but there's a chasm between those in TV who believe that classics can and should be screened for the millions who never make it into the theatre, and those who can imagine nothing worse. The former camp underestimates the formal difficulties, while the latter cites the generally stodgy BBC Shakespeare seasons or the stage *Play of the Month* slot of yesteryear, rightly asserting that they made for second-hand theatre and third-rate television. That group cannot have tuned into such triumphs as Anthony Page's masterly screen version of *Absolutely Hell* that led to a major National Theatre revival with many of the same cast. Nor can they have been part of the audience of two million entranced by Juliet Stevenson in *A Doll's House* or Zoë Wanamaker and Colin Firth in DH Lawrence's *The Widowing of Mrs Holroyd*.

If these highlights from previous series are anything to go by, tonight's opening of the sixth *Performance* season should be worth staying in for. Anyone who has ever considered a committed relationship is in for a provocative evening on the settee watching the intimate Donmar Warehouse production of Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's startling musical, *Company*. Kevin Elyot's heart-breaker *My Night With Reg* hits the screen on 15 March, closely followed by Fiona Shaw repeating her controversial performance as Shakespeare's Richard II. Henry Goodman and Margot Leicester as the Jewish couple whose lives are torn apart by guilt in Arthur Miller's *Broken Glass* complete the quartet of West End triumphs coming to a TV screen near you. Four theatrical sensations, plus Penny Woolcock's *Macbeth on the Estate*, an adaptation of Shakespeare filmed on location in Birmingham. Dead cert?

"People say: 'The reason your plays work is that they're great plays, you're not taking risks.' By that token," Curtis says, "every Shakespeare production at the RSC would be a success." It's true. Great ingredients don't necessarily make the perfect meal. On paper, John Malkovich, Miranda Richardson and Kate Nelligan in Pinter's powerfully static *Old Times* should have scorched the sofa. Instead it remained frozen. The trouble with televising Pinter is that his elliptical dialogue flattens out into TV naturalism and the highly



As seen on TV: Fiona Shaw repeats her controversial performance as Richard II on 15 March

charged atmosphere that floods the auditorium like dry ice stops dead at the lens.

Curtis, who came from the Royal Court to create *Performance*, has formed his guidelines on the job. "I learned pretty quickly that Isen works better the Chekhov. Isen is structured not unlike a soap opera with very intense, two- or three-handers, but the beauty of Chekhov is the ensemble which the camera can't capture. It selects. You think, 'Why are we looking at that when I want to be over there or watching those two?' " Then there's the problem of pacing. "Theatre plays almost always begin incredibly slowly. In *Hedda Gabler* there's 25 minutes, the length of a whole soap episode, before *Hedda* appears. Theatre writers are allowing the audience to get comfortable, to get used to the world. Television is about grabbing the audience immediately or they'll go. I'm always in favour of a director trimming but that's tricky."

He believes that quiet, intense, emotional

moments work best, rather than trying to capture big coups de théâtre. *Company* marks a departure, having been shot in the theatre, but it fits his criteria. "It's at its best when you just see Adrian Lester sitting on a chair singing a fantastic song in close-up." That exposing of emotions is what makes *My Night With Reg* so remarkable. Roger Michell takes the original ensemble cast who know each other and the subtext inside out and places the camera at the heart of the emotional cross-currents. On stage it was a hilarious and painful play about the lies people tell. On screen it becomes a profoundly moving exploration of the truths they hide.

As BBC2 slides relentlessly down-market - witness the axing of *Moving Pictures*, television's finest film programme and the arrival of such burning subjects for *Late Review* as *The First Wives Club* - isn't *Performance* under threat from the ratings-chasing ethos? "I never ever had any worries at all from the powers-that-be about audiences. They just want it to be quality work. In this little strand

there is still that belief that the BBC should do work that some people will enjoy. That doesn't have to be a jackpot thing."

None the less, Curtis isn't living in an ivory tower and he keeps an eye on ratings and TV names. An appropriate sitcom actor could bring him a 10th or a 20th of the *Only Fools and Horses* audience. "That's the equivalent of an awful lot of nights in a theatre. I do everything I can to draw attention to the work and make it as accessible and popular as possible and then pray to God that the film on BBC1 isn't too good that night. One of my favourites was Paddy Chayevsky's *The Mother*. We had Anne Bancroft, it was the first time the play had ever been revived and it went out on the night of the first ever Lottery draw. We were dead in the water. That's the problem with TV. I've learnt not to care about audience figures. It's a crap shoot."

'Company' opens the new 'Performance' season: 8.30 tonight, BBC2

The singing will never be done

'Another Orpheus sings again, and loves, and weeps, and dies' - thanks to Messrs Monteverdi, Gluck and Haydn. By Nick Kimberley

We are in the gym of a disused inner-city school. A basketball court is marked out, a dozen or so players in everyday clothes take up positions. Is it a team formation for some exotic new form of the game? Suddenly they begin an odd ritual, like throwing seed. While they sow, they sing. Stranger still, facing them across the court is a harpsichordist.

What is unfolding is a scene from Monteverdi's *Orfeo*. This could be from one of those trendy po-mo productions in which baroque formality is juxtaposed with the debris of contemporary

urban life. In fact, it's a rehearsal for a new Kent Opera staging, and the gym is not scenery, simply a rehearsal room. When the production reaches the stage, there will be no inner-city flotsam. Still, Orpheus remains a figure for our times, whose natural habitat is opera. Over the coming weeks we have the chance to compare and contrast different versions of the tale from the first two centuries of operatic history: Kent Opera's *Orfeo* (premiered in Mantua, 1607); a new English

National Opera production of Gluck's *Orfeo*, ed Euridice (Vienna, 1762); and, in both

a new recording, and a pair of concert performances by the London Philharmonic, Haydn's last opera, *L'isola del diavolo* (written for London in 1791 but unperformed in the composer's lifetime).

By definition, myth has no text, but, in its Greek form, the legend of Orpheus had its hero dismembered by female followers of the god Bacchus for the sin of sparing womankind. His head, the legend added, went on singing as it floated out to sea. In one version of the libretto which the poet Strigione provided for Monteverdi, the opera ends with Orpheus fleeing from the Bacchantes. It's not known if the composer ever set this episode to music; the surviving score offers a new finale, in which Apollo ushers Orpheus heavenwards, where he once more encounters Eurydice's loveliness "in the sun and in the stars". For modern audiences, this is anticlimax, as is the ending of Gluck's opera, in which Amor (aka Cupid), having restored Eurydice to life, reunites her with Orpheus to the sound of general rejoicing.

It's not something that much bothers Tim Carroll, who directs Kent Opera's new

'Orpheus with his lute made trees, and the mountain tops that freeze, bow themselves when he did sing'

HUTTON GETTY

staging of the Monteverdi: "The myth is so succinct in its representation of the power of music, encapsulated in the idea of Orpheus being able to move stones and charm animals. Then we come to Monteverdi's opera, which asks 'Can music defeat death?' and it answers, 'In a way, yes: not physically, but in another way.' Monteverdi's ending has had a bad press, suggesting that it's a Hollywood-style happy ending tacked on because the 'focus group' didn't like the original. But, in the opera, the Bacchantes would be a distraction. It's not relevant to the themes of the piece that a group of women should come in and tear Orpheus to pieces. That's a myth about denying the sexual imperative; it's not what interests me here, nor did it interest Monteverdi. His point was to emphasise what music achieves."

Meanwhile, at ENO, director Martha Clarke has been grappling with Gluck's "problem" ending. For her, "The myth is more interesting and I had a day of being enchanted with the idea of going against the music, of making the ending dark. Then I realised it was pushing it too far and getting frightfully arty." Jane Glover, conductor of the ENO performances, goes further: "I don't think Gluck liked the happy ending any more than the rest of us. You have a feeling that, after the coup de théâtre where Amor returns Eurydice to life, the composer hands the reins to the choreographer and says, 'OK, you finish it, and that's why the opera ends with a sequence of dances.'"

Surprisingly, it is Haydn's opera that comes closest to the myth: Eurydice dies; Orpheus is poisoned by the Bacchantes. As Christopher Hogwood, the conductor of the new Decca recording, remarks: "It must have been a real challenge for Haydn, writing his first opera for London, the world's musical centre, to end it with both main characters dead, a whimper, a long drum roll and lots of D minor. In fact, some people have wondered whether the opera is really finished, whether perhaps we're missing

a fifth act with a happy ending."

Not that Hogwood is suggesting that their happy endings somehow compromise the operas by Gluck and Monteverdi: "Opera lives from minute to minute, and you can go the full way emotionally with either opera while knowing that, at the end, there's going to be this little rescue act by Apollo or Amor." Some recent stagings of the two works have enacted the Bacchic dismemberment in mime while the music offers the *lento* fine that operatic convention demanded. Hogwood believes that Haydn's opera resists any such stylisation - one reason why it remains a rarity: "Modern producers find it hard to accept Haydn's conventions. You can't transpose a Haydn piece like this to Harlem, you can't have the heroine high on drugs, you can't have them all in boxer shorts and skateboards. So it poses problems for producers who can't take theatrical ventures on their own terms, and very few can."

Neither Kent nor ENO are offering modern-dress stagings, nor are they striving for cod baroque or Arcadian pastoralism. As Tim Carroll says, "Monteverdi's opera is a piece about mankind, and it requires a sense of 'ancientness' only inasmuch as it provides a feeling of continuity, that this has always been the case. It's a question of trying to create a world that has the texture of being connected to the earth, of happening in a real place to real people. That's the genius of this opera: it's absolutely emblematic, and at the same time absolutely human."

It's also a work that draws its power largely from its vocal lines. Although he's an early music specialist, Kent Opera's conductor John Toll is less concerned with authenticity than with expressivity: "I wanted voices that were - can I use the word? - unspoilt. Singers get precious about the voice as an instrument, and so lose an intuitive, spontaneous response to text. The expressive force of a voice is generated by text, and that's particularly essential here, where

Monteverdi is searching for a natural way of imitating speech through music. A highly stylised and oratorical speech, no doubt, but using music to boost its emotional force."

ENO's Orfeo is the counter-tenor Michael Chance, perhaps the world's leading interpreter of the role - at least in the original 1762 version of Gluck's opera, written for the castrato Guadagni (Gluck later revised the part for high tenor, while most modern stagings compromise on a mezzo in drag). Nor, says ENO conductor Jane Glover, are they "corrupting" the original text with any of the music from later versions: "If you're going to do the 1762 version, then do it. People may say, 'Where's that lovely flute part? Where's the

Dance of the Blessed Spirits? But forget that those things have ever been there, and the piece unfolds in an incredibly tight way. It's so strong, we're running it without an interval."

Martha Clarke, best known as a choreographer, is using a complement of dancers, not as ornament but as what she calls "the colour-field of Orpheus' emotional journey".

"The opera is tremendously pure, so the production is simple and stark. My own direction in choreography is towards the theatrical gesture that emerges from natural movement, rather than anything based on traditional technique. What I've been trying to do is to find a common language, to merge the vocabularies of singers and dancers,

so that you look at them and you can't tell who is doing what: the dancers are part of the community of Orpheus."

The community of Orpheus is a large one, embracing all opera, and all singers. Opera may have dismembered the myth for its own purposes but, as these three variants show, that dismemberment can never stop Orpheus from singing.

Monteverdi: 7.30 tonight, 3pm Sun. Theatre Royal, Margate (01843 203877), 7.45 Thu. QEH, SBC, London (0171-960 4242) and touring. Gluck: from Mon, 8pm ENO, London Coliseum (0171-632 8300). Haydn: LPO concert performances, 7pm 20, 25 March QEH (as above); Hogwood recording on Decca / L'Oiseau Lyre (452 668-2)

Monday's Arts pages now appear in the Broadsheet section

2 ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINATIONS
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS • BEST COSTUME DESIGN

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF 'THE PIANO'
A FILM BY JANE CAMPION

NICOLE KIDMAN
JOHN MALKOVICH
BARBARA HERSHEY

"A CINEMATIC MASTERPIECE"
"Effortlessly blending film, art and literature at a level not seen before"
THE DAILY MAIL

"Nicole Kidman gives a HEART-BREAKINGLY LOVELY performance"
COSMOPOLITAN

"A TRULY MESMERISING PORTRAIT"
"Nicole Kidman's startling intensity holds you enthralled"
ROLLING STONE

"A HAUNTINGLY BEAUTIFUL adaptation of Henry James's novel... A feast for the eyes"
MARE CLARE

The Portrait of a Lady

NOW SHOWING AT A CINEMA NEAR YOU



Seriously comic

Charles Shaar Murray explores a graphic dream world

The Sandman: the wake
by Neil Gaiman.
Titan Books, £19.99

Is Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* the greatest comic book of all time? In your dreams. Those who still consider Norman Mailer a major figure in American cultural life should know that he provided *Sandman* with a blurb from heaven. "Sandman," the Great Man asserted in a widely-circulated print-out, "is a comic strip for intellectuals, and I say it's about time."

So caveat lector! After all, we have no way of knowing whether Mailer has read any comics since his days in the US Army over half a century ago. Successive generations of intellectuals have lavished praise on successive generations of comics: the allusive surrealism of George Herriman's *Krazy Kat*, the lucid political satire of Walt Kelly's *Pogo*, the innovative graphic ingenuity of Will Eisner's *Spirit*, the sheer vitality of Stan Lee and Jack Kirby's original batch of Marvel Comics superheroes, and the scabrous confessionalism of Robert Crumb. More recently, Art Spiegelman's Holocaust fable *Maus*, Frank Miller's breathtaking redefinition of Batman, *The Dark Knight Returns*, and Alan Moore's devastating critique of the superhero, *Watchmen*, have all attracted attention far beyond the confines of the traditional comics ghetto.

However, nothing produced in the field during the past ten years has come close to the crucial combination of popular and critical success achieved by Gaiman's *Sandman* series. Uniquely among big-selling comics titles, this is a strip primarily concerned with ideas. *Sandman* is a story about story, a myth about myth, a postmodern metafiction with word balloons. "If

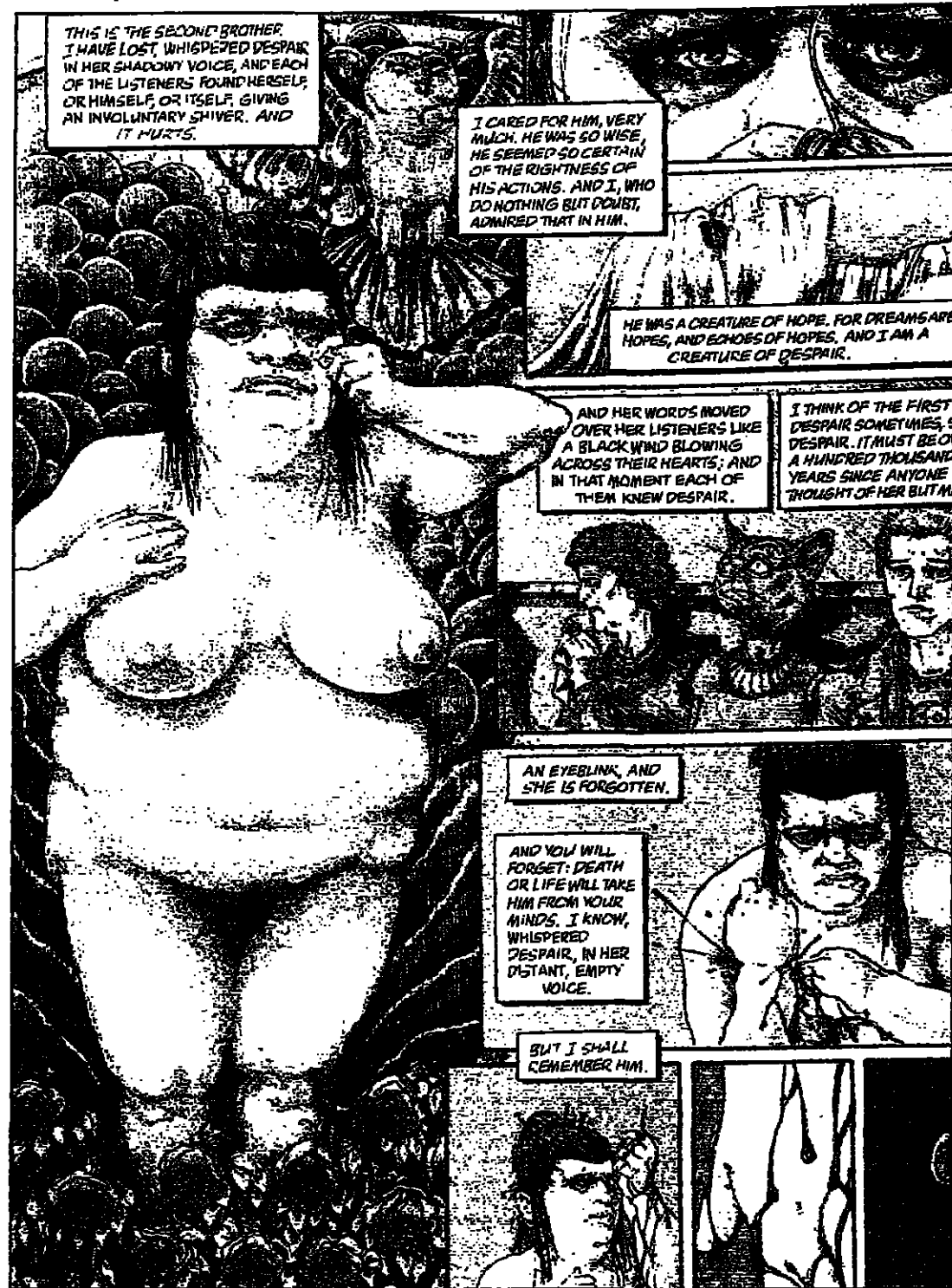
this isn't literature," Peter Straub wrote defiantly in an afterword to the *Sandman* collection *Brief Lives*, "nothing is."

Between 1988 and 1996, the *Sandman* comic ran for 75 monthly issues – not to mention the odd special or spin-off – and was collected into ten "graphic novels". The last of them, *The Wake*, is published this week. By the time the title was wound down – at the author's behest – *Sandman* had accumulated a formidable shelf of awards, was selling over a million copies a year, and had a *Who's Who* of fantasy and horror writers (Stephen King, Gene Wolfe, Clive Barker, Ramsey Campbell) queuing up to sing its praises.

Yet *Sandman*'s beginnings were inauspicious. In a comics world dominated by fights in tights, the primary assets are titles and characters rather than artists or writers. Editors seek ways to revamp obscure or faltering characters. The original *Sandman* was a 1940s no-hoper disinterred from the mouldering pages of *Justice Society of America*: a Bruce Wayne-like millionaire playboy in trenchcoat, fedora and mask, who fought crime by putting villains to sleep with a gas-gun. Unfortunately, he had an identical effect on readers.

DC Comics editor Karin Berger therefore risked little when she handed the poor schlub over to Neil Gaiman (a personable English pop-culture hack) for updating. Gaiman repaid her perception: in a major coup, he transformed the dulldest excuse for a superhero ever to waste woodpulp into the dream figure of Morpheus, Lord Of Dreams – the Prince of Stories himself.

Gaiman's *Sandman* was nothing less than a personification of the human imagination. His saga was described by one critic as "a secret history of the unconscious". Mor-



"Black wind blowing across our hearts": the archetypal figure of Despair in 'The Wake' DC COMICS/TITAN

pheus – aka Dream, or Oneiros – is one of the archetypes who call themselves The Endless, the others being Destiny, Despair, Desire, Delirium (who used to be Delight) and Destruction (who retired in the 17th century because humans no longer needed him). Dream is a tall, pallid figure with a shock of black hair, somewhat resembling The Cure's Robert Smith, minus the lipstick, after being thoroughly stretched on a rack. His realm is The Dreaming, an ever-changing Gormenghast-like castle surrounded by nebulous landscapes; it's where we go when we dream.

Morpheus has absolutely no sense of humour. Fortunately, his elder sister Death (who nevertheless looks younger) does. An adorable punkette with an irredeemably optimistic outlook, she incongruously became many readers' favourite. Her solo story, *Death: The High Cost Of Living*, will be filmed with a screenplay by the author.

Gaiman is an omnivorous reader and a formidable researcher. *Sandman* is packed with pastiche, allusion and greater and lesser arcanes of all descriptions. Historical figures such as William Shakespeare, who appears as himself here in two key tales based on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the *Tempest*, rub shoulders with the fictional creations of others, some derived from the repertory company of DC's own comics; others from the entire tapestry of human myth.

The many hands who have illustrated the strip over the past eight years have borrowed the appearances of a variety of notables. Lucifer, the Fallen Angel, is the young David Bowie; Delirium resembles the avant-garde novelist Kathy Acker, and Fiddlers' Green, a place in The Dreaming which decided to get up and walk, does so as G K Chesterton.

The most consciously literary mass-market comic strip ever,

Sandman finally counts as a conditional triumph. As is appropriate for a dream about dreams, *Sandman* is gossamer-thin, not always able to support the weight of the symbolic anvils Gaiman places upon it. The strip rarely stops winking at the reader, and even at its grimmest and goriest it remains oversweet. Gaiman's weakness remains the cuteness demonstrated in his overblown novel and TV series *Neverwhere*. But even if *Sandman* isn't the greatest comic of the century, it is good enough to demand to be judged by those standards.

Before *Sandman*, the Lord of Dreams had no dreams of his own: the Prince of Stories lacked a tale. Neil Gaiman has remedied that. *The Wake* is a sober, sombre conclusion – literally, a dying fall – to a sequence that undeniably constitutes a major achievement. There is nothing quite like it anywhere else.

Charlotte the Obscure

Michael Arditti on the poet who might have said "kiss me, Hardy"

His Arms are Full of Broken Things by P B Parris, Viking, £16

To most contemporary readers, Charlotte Mew is Charlotte Who, the unfortunate rhyme emphasising the fate of a poet who was never admitted into the canon of great literature and is now rarely even allowed through the journeyman's door. And yet, as the epigraphs to P B Parris's fictionalised biography make clear, Thomas Hardy revered her while Siegfried Sassoon declared her the equal of Emily Brontë.

With one major exception, Parris's fictional life sticks very closely to the factual account in Penelope Fitzgerald's admirable *Charlotte Mew and Her Friends*.

Her book is a first-person variant on Fitzgerald's third-person narrative, from the opening incident (the arrival of a doll's house designed by her architect father), to her final words ("Don't keep me. Let me go"). Even tiny details are the same, such as Charlotte banging her head against a wall when her beloved teacher retires, her adult voice veering as erratically as an adolescent boy's, and Frederick Rolfe leaving lice on chairs.

Mew's life was more deeply rooted in domesticity than even Stevie Smith's, and Parris vividly portrays the world of an upper-middle class family whose social position was threatened not only by poverty but by insanity.

Two of Mew's siblings were incarcerated in asylums and both she and her remaining sister, Anne, swore never to marry (in Charlotte's case this was clearly a way of rationalising her repressions). Although Parris describes her visit to Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, Mew's own drama was closer to the guilty secrets and hereditary curse of Strindberg's *Ghosts*.

Parris's chief invention is a romance between Charlotte and Thomas Hardy (whom Fitzgerald records merely as an admirer of her poetry and an occasional host). Their love, declared after a chance meeting in the British Museum and left unconsummated for more

than 30 years, not only dominates Mew's life but influences both of their writings. To Parris, Hardy is the inspiration for Mew's poem "The Farmer's Bride", while Mew is the model for Sue Bridehead in *Jude the Obscure*.

Like Mew's own poetry (liberally quoted here), Parris's novel is strongest in the depiction of loneliness and unrequited love: not just the relationship with Hardy but Mew's two more authentic passions for the writers Ella D'Arcy and May Sinclair, both of whom receive her declaration with the contempt that "the normal heart" reserves for the deviant. No fictional character since Radclyffe Hall's Stephen Gordon has been more obviously propelled into lesbianism than Parris's Mew, who wears her dead father's clothes and is blithely told by her mother that "You must be the man of the family, Charlotte".

Parris's richly imagistic prose is particularly suited to conveying the isolated intensities of childhood. It is less successful at evoking the more complex web of adult life.

Nor does it provide the thematic, symbolic or intellectual unity required of a novel. It remains a fictionalised biography rather than biographical fiction. Chronology becomes its only guiding principle, with a resultant lack of weight. One understands why Mew, who wrote much from her own experience (however disguised), became a poet and a short-story writer rather than a novelist.

Parris's Hardy advises Mew that she should write "those stories – however extraordinary or unorthodox – that one would never relate to one's family at the dinner table".

The problem for Parris herself is that stories of sexual ambiguity and murky domesticity which would have been unrepeatable in polite Victorian society are commonplace today. Nevertheless, what the book lacks in force, it makes up for in imagery. Mew has been fortunate in drawing such a distinguished stylist to her cause.

Ambulance chasers

Marcel Berlins takes a crash course in fraud

Accidentally on Purpose: the making of a personal injury underworld in America by Ken Dornstein, Macmillan, £19.50

There is a scene in the 1967 film *Meet Whiplash Willie* (in England, *The Fortune Cookie*) in which an ambulance-chasing lawyer played by Walter Matthau is trying to persuade a football player slightly hurt during a game to launch a lawsuit for compensation for his injuries. "I hate to break it to you, kid, but you got a spinal injury... your left leg is numb and you got no feeling in the first three fingers of your right hand." "You're crazy," the Jack Lemmon character replies, "I can move my hand. And my leg." "Sure you can – if you want to blow a million bucks... that's what we're suing for."

The craze for litigation based on whiplash – neck – injuries lasted through the Sixties and Seventies. Insurance companies paid out billions of dollars to claimants who were inventing their injuries entirely or, at best, creatively exaggerating them. But the whiplash phenomenon was just one small part of an unpublicised American industry: a criminal underworld devoted to the faking of personal injuries.

This is not a book about a few slippery lawyers and doctors conspiring with greedy accident

victims to talk up their symptoms and prognoses in order to exact additional compensation. Those scams exist but are the small beer of the trade. What Ken Dornstein describes in *Accidentally on Purpose* is a veritable gangland of ruthless, sophisticated operators using modern methods to defraud insurance companies out of huge sums.

Here is one example: the "capper" is the planner, the choreographer, whose job is to stage an accident that will look like the real thing and lead to multiple claims. He hires "dummies", the victims, often poor Hispanic immigrants. For as little as \$100 each, they will pack into a car ("the squat car") that they know will be involved in an accident. The capper then hires a specialist driver whose job is to provoke an innocent trucker into crashing into the squat car.

The logistics are carefully planned: where, when and what kind of impact is required. The accident achieved, the dummies file their injury claims with the help of dishonest lawyers. Of course, they don't receive a cent of the proceeds. Occasionally, the staging goes wrong and the dummies are hurt badly or even killed. Recently, an attorney who masterminded these "swoop-and-squat" operations was indicted for his part in the death of a passenger in a squat car.

Dornstein started his career as a private investigator in Los Angeles, looking into suspicious accidents. His book describes dozens of varieties of contemporary scams. But his exhaustive historical trawl is even more intriguing.

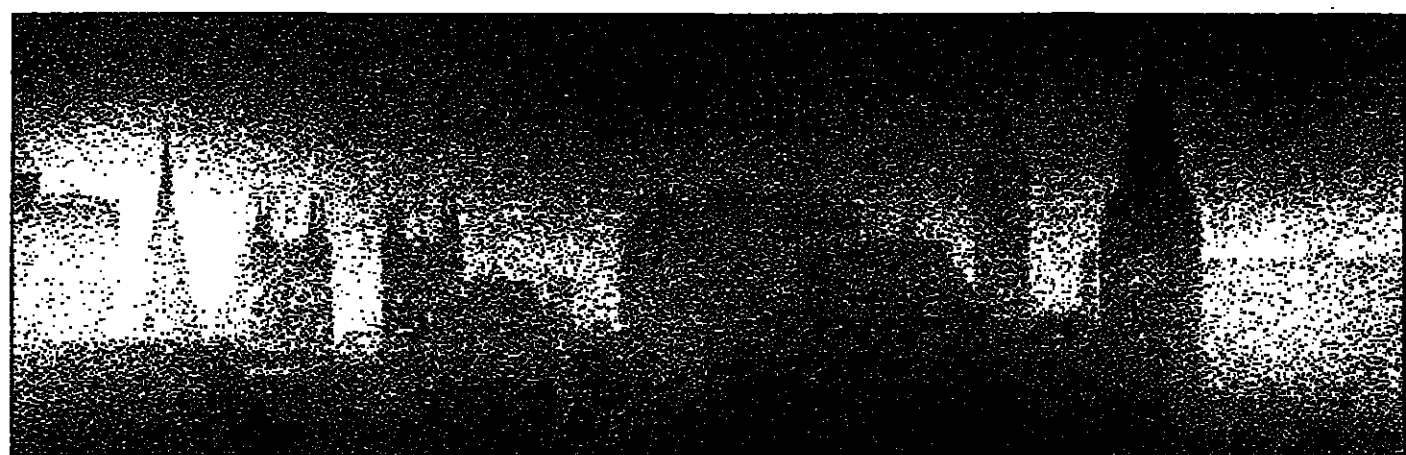
The sheer imagination and expertise of some past fraudsters is

impressive. In the early, jolting days of rail travel, there was "railway spine", an alleged injury caused by sudden movements. "Slip-and-fallers" have been around for a century; "Banana Annie" carried her own peels for slipping on.

One frequent claimant was capable, at will, both of dislocating her bones, and of haemorrhaging. Another regular had the advantage of a neck showed up under X-ray, always showed up as broken. During the Depression years the fad was for self-mutilation, with the cleverer claimants managing to cash in from several companies on the basis of one "accidental" amputation.

Along the way, Dornstein divertingly investigates the terminology of his subject. The term "ambulance chaser", but his too – entered the language in the 1890s and was in common use by 1910. Shyster, to mean a dishonest lawyer, did not come, as is usually believed, from the nefarious activities of Sheuster, a New York attorney; Dornstein has discovered an earlier use and, besides, can find no trace of the existence of Sheuster.

Accidentally on Purpose contains a great deal of information which has never before been assembled, on a topic which has never before been so scrutinised. Dornstein has done prodigious research (his references amount to 70 pages) and does not always resist the temptation to tell us too much. On the other hand the book is clearly written, contains many interesting and obscure facts, and provides an insight into yet another, hitherto secret, crooked world.



Seduced by the smoke

Dear London: notes from the big city by Irma Kurtz, Fourth Estate, £14.99

Why should Irma Kurtz ever get married? She's already married to London. Having walked out on New York and her flaming affair with Paris, she chose her poison, "ambivalent, self-searching, diffident, handsome, tolerant, widespread, whingeing, ironical, laid back, lazy old Smoke".

She is one of the spunky expats who arrived in London in the pre-swinging days when ladies still wore white gloves. And the city lifted her on wave after wave. But she was always too sharp and voluble to play the dozy hippie role convincingly.

Kurtz is rare among women because she loves great cities with an almost erotic passion: the glimpse of a courtyard, a lighted window, can make her tunces for the never-to-be-totally possessed loved one. Not that she hasn't tried – she spent years burrowing in its boroughs, but is now ensconced in the thick of it all, in Soho.

I first saw her striding into work in a big advertising agency in Berkeley Square. She was just over from Paris, sporting an existentialist pallor and a black plastic mac. Even the mac radiated urban romance.

Jill Neville shares the urban ecstasy of an agony aunt who married the metropolis

Dennis Hackett, the fabled editor of *Nova*, phoned and asked her to join the staff. Irma Kurtz was in at last. "Journalism is to England as bullfighting is to Spain," she writes, "a daring national sport that offers youngsters up out of pedestrian destinies. Hopeful scribbles from the English-speaking world are drawn to London the way hopeful *toreros* are to the Spanish capitals."

No more the *longueur* of office jobs. Overnight, all her bad habits became virtues: the talkativeness, the inquisitiveness, the unstoppable communicativeness. She interviewed every celeb in and out of town and wrote it all up with sleek audacity.

Being young, she was programmed for romance. She found that "the English lover uses a crab-like circumlocution, a sort of scuttling at the most basic declaration, which also serves to confuse amorous predators of the opposite sex".

But she's fond of the poor brutes, "stuck with flashy genitalia that can't be trusted to keep a secret, let alone keep faith". For this female Don Juan, men are lovable creatures but you wouldn't want to live with one.

Instead, she had her beloved son by an artist equally ferocious about not getting married; this was not fashionable at the time.

Her pivotal friendships are curious, often floundering through lack of trust, or perhaps some self-protective reflex designed to keep lots of cool space around her psyche so the whole city can crowd in. She doesn't enjoy formality and is phobic about dinner parties, particularly the embalmed or bitchy kind that she imagines occur nightly in North London.

Kurtz is strictly a street and bar-room *flâneuse*, always talking, explicit, explosive, expository, experimental, expository, and excited. While there's the lovely dirty city, there's life – although she can see the squalor, it's not the main thing.

When *Cosmopolitan* made her an agony aunt, she found her métier. "I've been a busy-body since the day I was born and it was about time someone paid for what I'd been handing out free all my life." She has been at it now for more than 20 years and still it doesn't bore or swamp her.

There's no whiff of phoniness about this love letter to London, written with bristling intelligence and all the ironies of hindsight, only occasionally falling into journalism. We can go to sleep knowing the city is throbbing away, stuffed with gangsters, drifters, bohemians, businessmen and trampy bums, presided over by our benevolent American-born agony aunt. Only this urban cowgirl, with her endless readiness to be intrigued could take the whole city to bed with her every night. That's love indeed.

NEW AUTHORS
PUBLISH YOUR WORK
ALL SUBJECTS CONSIDERED
Fiction, Non-Fiction, Biography, Romance,
Poetry, Children's
AUTHORS WORLDWIDE WANTED
WRITE OR SEND YOUR MANUSCRIPT TO
MINERVA PRESS
2 OLD BROMPTON RD, LONDON SW7 3BD

هكذا من الأصل

Human folly and the fictions of war

DJ Taylor on plain men in dark times

The Pardon of Saint Anne by William Palmer, Cape, £9.99
The World at Night by Alan Furst, HarperCollins, £16.99

Novels about the emotional consequences of warfare tend to take place off the battlefield. Even *Vanity Fair*, much of whose impetus derives from the battle of Waterloo, offers only a single military snapshot – George Osborne lying dead with a bullet in his heart. Similarly, one of the best English novels about the Second World War is Patrick Hamilton's *The Slaves of Solitude* (1947), set in a Thames Valley boarding house, where the tyranny is practised by domineering old armchair-loungers and the victims are browbeaten spinsters. While the heroes of William Palmer's and Alan Furst's new novels are both combatants of a kind, each seems exercised less by sudden death than by the emotional detachment canvassed in Hamilton's title. In these circumstances the dangers of flight are regularly anaesthetised by the promise of a brief recall from the disembodied half-state that war imposes on the average mind. As Furst's protagonist puts it, while contemplating his enforced departure from occupied Paris, "The preparation of an escape... whatever else it did, showed you your life from an angle of profound reality."

How best to approximate that reality? It was Christopher Isherwood, back in the days of Herr Issywo and Sally Bowles, who popularised the idea of the protagonist as camera lens. The precedent has not been a happy one, and most novels with photographer heroes have a tendency to entangle themselves in rather banal theorising about the nature of pictorial representation. Fortunately Walter Klinger, the focus – no pun intended – of William Palmer's excellent fourth novel, affects a less exalted gaze: "I had a half-apprehended vision of being the cold, implacable eye that regards human folly," he remarks; the laureate of "the gob of phlegm as life turned brown, grey, dead again". This being the Berlin of the Thirties – and the Isherwood connection, if slight, is unavoidable – Walter has a good many opportunities. The opening section of *The Pardon of Saint Anne*, in fact, is a series of snapshots pulled from the reel of a disintegrating world. Living in the French-occupied part of western Germany with his widowed, English mother, Walter acquires his first camera from a French officer with whom the mother seems to be having an affair. Subsequent instruction, both in darkroom techniques and seduction strategies, comes courtesy of Valenti, an itinerant Jack-the-Lad, who sets himself up as the little spa town's official photographer.

Departing for Berlin in the dog



'Chronicle of evil': Hitler, Albert Speer (right) and Leonard Gall inspect the construction of the House of German Art in Munich

PHOTOGRAPH: AKG

days of Weimar to lodge with his decayed Junker grandmother. Walter finds his horizons sharply transformed in "an atmosphere of abandonment – of morals and conviction and hope". A lifetime's contacts are insufficient to save worldly Uncle Karl from the knock at the door, and Walter's decision to spend the period of his uncle's abduction in bed with a girlfriend ("I don't even remember her name") seems symptomatic of the wider malaise. Walter takes a job on a propaganda sheet called *Signal*, where Valenti is energetically in control, and balances his day job with covert help for a Jewish art photographer whose business he fronts while the woman moulders away in the seclusion of her flat.

Abruptly, time fast-forwards to spring 1944 to find Walter, most of his hearing gone in a bomb blast, part of a "craze brigade" guarding the extreme south-west coast of France and embroiled with an Irish woman who inhabits a deserted farmhouse. In a world where every action and thought is governed by the prospect of invasion, Palmer's account of the collection of Nazi officers, each seeking solace in some rarefied hobby, carries tre-

mendous psychological conviction. Appropriately enough it is Captain Wahl's anthropological researches, prosecuted by way of a trip to the ecclesiastical ceremony of the title, which set up the novel's climax. Surviving a resistance-laid car bomb that kills another of his colleagues, Wahl is charged with sifting through the dead man's belongings. Otto's photographs of the execution squads of the Eastern Front confirm his suspicions and – though the ending is ambiguous – prefigure his own destiny.

Unobtrusively done, with the photographic symbolism quietly shifted into place – "It was the Age of silver. Silver and black," Walter laconically remarks of the rise of the SS – *The Pardon of Saint Anne* is an impressive study of the effect of totalitarianism on the average emotional life. At present William Palmer's reputation languishes in that queer hinterland where the esteem of fellow-writers is cancelled out by the indifference of the world at large. It would be a shame if this novel didn't provoke the attention he clearly deserves.

With jacket salutations from William Boyd and Robert Harris, one rather feels that Alan Furst, in

contrast, has already begun to get his just deserts. Set in occupied Paris circa 1940-41, and featuring a movie-director hero, *The World at Night* hits some similar targets. Leaving aside the lavishly-framed atmosphere of subterfuge, Furst's novel is built on more or less the same premise: the individual trying to retain some tiny sense of himself in an increasingly unreal world. Like Palmer, Furst is adept at conveying the sense of drift that draws his characters into situations they would probably have avoided if presented with a definitive choice.

Thus womanising, fortysomething Casson finds that the simple act of pursuing his livelihood – by making films acceptable to the authorities – drags him into an intricate web of collusion, complicated by an affair with an elusive actress. If anything undermines the novel, it's a slight feeling of genre-sanctioned theatricality (Eric Ambler's name is twice invoked). But even the tuppence-coloured love interest – all discarded stockings and small-hours cigarettes – can't detract from an absorbing piece of recreated time, for which the publishing taxonomy of "historical spy novel" seems over-modest.

David Cesarani on a new life of Hitler's henchman

The Good Nazi: the life and lies of Albert Speer by Dan Van Der Vat, Weidenfeld, £20

The fascination of Albert Speer's story is undeniable, even for generations born long after the war he did so much to sustain on the German side. Speer was a well-educated, cultured German converted to Nazism after witnessing Hitler speak. He entered the Party in March 1931, aged 25, and for the next 14 years his meteoric career was bound up with the party, the Third Reich and the Führer. Speer had good looks, intelligence, energy, charisma and luck. His life is a classic success story intertwined with a chronicle of evil, which is what makes it so piquant. We can easily identify with the charming, gifted and upwardly mobile young professional; the trouble is, he's a Nazi.

Two years ago, Gitta Sereny

published a monumental study of Speer that probed the other endlessly fascinating aspect of his life. At the Nuremberg Tribunal, Speer was one of two defendants to accept responsibility for the crimes of Hitler's regime, although he denied specific knowledge of its heinous acts. He convinced the judges of his repentance but thereafter argument has raged about what he knew and whether his contrition was genuine. To answer these questions, Sereny interviewed Speer exhaustively and juxtaposed his oral recollections against a mass of other evidence.

Dan Van Der Vat began work on his book about Speer when Sereny's tome was already on the slipway. He decided to await the latter's publication so that he could use it as a "source", while deliberately eschewing the interview method which made it distinctive. Van Der Vat claims that anyone who got too close to Speer inexorably fell under his spell. In his

bibliography he naughtily lists Sereny's biography under "Speer's corpus". But this device cannot deflect an inevitable comparison of the two works, in which Van Der Vat comes off the worst.

He presents little significant new information about Speer's life and work. In place of Sereny's penetrating psychological analysis, he delivers a few, commonplace observations about the effect of Speer's loveless upbringing. Whereas Sereny inquired deeply into the mutual admiration which Hitler and Speer displayed, he gives short shrift to the notion of a homo-erotic attachment and barely pauses to ask why the two struck up such an enduring friendship. "It was the participants, not their 'relationship' or its well springs, that were extraordinary."

If Sereny devoted too much attention to the relationship, this was a result of her creditable effort to humanise both men and to understand their motives. Van Der Vat is content with shallow psycho-biography and stereotypes, which do the work of explanation. What his study lacks in depth is barely compensated for in its breadth.

He basically accepts Speer's version of the "production miracle" in 1942-44, even though recent research has challenged it. Weapons output rose not because German industry became more efficient, as Speer suggested, but because he bullied industrialists into converting civilian production lines to armaments manufacture.

Van Der Vat merely confirms Speer's indifference to the fate of the Jews. The November 1938 pogrom had no impact on him. Speer brushed up against the Final Solution sufficiently often to render his denial of knowledge incredible; but he just didn't care. Van Der Vat's central charge is that Speer was personally instrumental in evicting 75,000 Berlin Jews in 1941-42, thus ensuring their doom. He knew this was a crime and struggled to cover it up, arranging for the chronicle of his ministry to be "sanitised". While taking broad responsibility for the deeds of the regime, he omitted from his biography any reference to his own particular role. Van Der Vat argues that since his "confession" was incomplete, his famous remorse could not have been genuine. It was part of a strategy of self-preservation and manipulation that he began while awaiting trial in 1945.

Like Sereny's tome, this one is marked by long historical digressions. It is additionally marred by some sloppy writing, flippant asides and appalling word jokes. Puns cheapen what is otherwise a solid biography. Van Der Vat scores some hits, notably his demolition of Speer's claim that he seriously considered assassinating Hitler. His use of the secret chronicle is impressive. Ultimately, however, because his approach lacks psychological depth, the critique of Speer sounds peevish. Speer may have beguiled Sereny, but because she engaged with him, she produced a magisterial portrait of human folly which overshadows Van Der Vat's workmanlike effort.

Independent choice: science books

By Bernard Dixon

Stupid things, mirrors," the comedian Tony Hancock said in one of his Sixties radio programmes. "Why can't they reflect things properly?" For many years, the neuropsychologist Richard Gregory has persisted in believing that Hancock's question deserves an answer and that many of those on offer are plainly wrong. His mission has been to show that our experience of mirrors, and of optical illusions, can help us to think about the still mysterious processes of perception. With abundant examples drawn not only from science but also from art, psychology and other domains, his latest book *Mirrors in Mind* (WH Freeman/Spektrum, £25) brings these issues to life with exceptional clarity and vitality.

Hancock's irritation stemmed from the fact that things seen in a looking-glass are reversed from left to right, but not top to bottom. "Mirror writing", for example, does not appear upside down. But this is by no means the only oddity. Look at each of your eyes alternately in a mirror. They do not appear to move. Yet a friend's eyes clearly do move if you ask him or her to look at one of your eyes and then the other. Why?

As Richard Gregory indicates, the first step towards understanding these phenomena is to realise that they raise questions at all. Gregory is an illuminating pilot, leading us through many competing interpretations to his goal of establishing that perception is not a passive acquisition of information from the outside world. It is an active process in which our brain uses past experience as well as incoming sensory cues.

"The paradox of seeing oneself

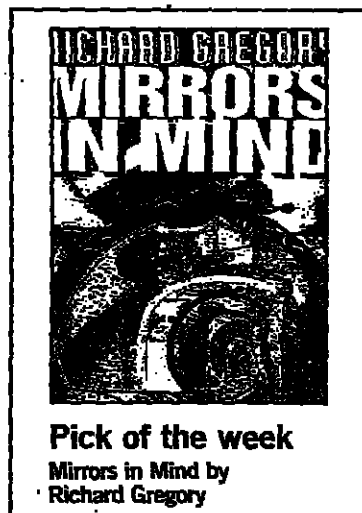
through a mirror while knowing one is in front of it... is not in the mirror or the light," Gregory writes. "It is in our perception. If we were either more or less stupid, such paradoxes might change, or disappear, or become even richer."

Mirrors also appear in *How Brains Think: Evolving Intelligence, Then and Now* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £11.99). The neuropsychologist William Calvin describes how some animals can recognise themselves in a mirror, while others try to attack or befuddle the reflected image. A capuchin monkey will spend weeks threatening the "other animal" when a mirror is placed in its cage, whereas chimpanzees know who it is either immediately or within a few days.

Calvin considers and then eliminates the idea of self-recognition as something that intelligence is not. He discards IQ, too, because it is simply "one fascinating aspect of intelligence", which should not subsume others. The capacity for complex behaviour is another tempting definition of intelligence, but not a plausible one because it can be innate, wired in from birth.

Calvin is much more taken by Jean Piaget's notion that intelligence is what you use when you don't know what to do: "This captures the element of novelty, the coping and groping needed when there is no 'right answer'." Yet this seems not to be the entire story, either. Likewise with speed of learning, which is simply "related to intelligence". Perhaps, Calvin concludes, intelligent behaviour is really the capacity to combine these and other mental abilities.

His book is not only an assessment of intelligence *per se* but also an exam-



Pick of the week
Mirrors in Mind by Richard Gregory

ination of how evolution has produced increasingly intelligent brains over the last few million years. Calvin brings both strands together by modernising William James's suggestion that thought involves Darwin's concept of the selection of randomly generated novelty. He points to "brain wiring that could operate the fully-fledged Darwinian process, and probably on the milliseconds-to-minutes time-scale of consciousness." This, he says, "has provided me with the best glimpses so far of mechanisms for higher intellectual function: how we can guess, speak sentences we've never spoken before, and even operate on a metaphorical plane."

By no means all Calvin's peers will follow him in discerning Darwin beneath our mental life. Yet it is a challenging theory, founded on a variety of evidence. It requires only a change of time-scale to sound highly plausible: the capacity of cells in the immune system to generate within days, through a quasi-Darwinian

process, antibodies to match an astronomical range of antigens which they encounter in invading microbes.

Paul Martin, in *The Sickening Mind: Brain, Behaviour, Immunity and Disease* (HarperCollins, £16.99) is concerned not with the analogy between mind and the immune system, but with the emerging links between the two. His primary task is to explain how stress and depression may increase our chances of developing infections, heart disease and even cancer. The "mind" is important not least because evidence that we can prevent illness by mobilising mental resources is less overwhelming than popular health books claim.

However, Martin is a sure guide in this controversial field – and an eloquent one. Like Richard Gregory, he bases his case in part on the observations of Shakespeare and other literary giants of the past. But it is contemporary science which most strongly supports his contention that the relationship of mind to health is mediated both by our behaviour, and by biological connections between the brain and the immune system.

Contemporary science is not yet ready to endorse Sir Roger Penrose's elegantly argued suggestion that consciousness itself is associated with the microtubules in brain cells. In *The Large, the Small and the Human Mind* (Cambridge University Press, £14.95), the Oxford mathematician is joined by his critics Abner Shimony, Nancy Cartwright and Stephen Hawking, to review Penrose's theory that thinking takes place by "non-computational" means. The jury is still out, but this book is a stimulating and compact review of Penrose's own thinking.

No Worries: a journey through Australia by Mark McCrum, Sinclair-Stevenson, £9.99

Once asked a Kiwi if the Maoris ever went to Australia. She said she didn't know, but if they did they'd have thought, Nah. Big hot dry buggery place, this. Then they'd have gone back home – and there are times when Mark McCrum evidently felt the same. Halfway through his book, he sets off round Broome "pessimistically seeking adventure", and I had by then rather come to share his pessimism.

Eurotoons drearily mating in backpacker hostels; people keeping him awake on the train; endless eucalyptuses – it may get him down, and when his girl-friend comes to visit (did we really need to know about that?) it may well make him homesick. But I did wonder whether a travel writer who gets homesick is, just possibly, in the wrong line of trade.

These *longueurs* are a shame; in a bitty way, there's good material here, tumbling out of English history towards its place on the Pacific Rim like an overweight gymnast uncertain how he'll land. Australia is certainly a subject crying out for better coverage. Between the bright froth of the cities and the harsh outback, McCrum

suggests well enough how the country is a thin neck of the modern world, tentatively slung round the parched vastness of its unfathomable interior.

But too often he struggles for focus. Australians keep asking, of his book about their home: "What aspect?" In the end, I wasn't too sure what aspect he was after myself. Backpackers aside, he meets a varied cast of characters, and he hears their voices well.

He makes a game stab at understanding the plight of the Aborigines; he offers lively cameos of the gay scene; he captures the rich and baffling ethnic mix, and he gives intriguing glimpses of the country's green activists. Some are stoned bumblebees, some (notably those in Tasmania) impressively persuasive. But too rarely does he stop long enough with any one of these matters to get a thorough handle on it.

Some of McCrum's strongest material comes in set pieces in the outback: for instance, in the brutal business of cattle mustering by four-wheel drive and helicopter, or the tragically weird account of an ancient and internationally renowned Aboriginal painter knocking out masterpieces in half an hour. (She gets a few hundred dollars for them, but they then sell in galleries for a

hundred times that much). But every time you feel that he's at last getting down into the red dirt of the place, he bounces back off it, as if Australia is just too strange – as if he can't leave his Englishness behind.

Perhaps the problem, after Bill Bryson's success, is that publishers now want every travel writer to be funny. McCrum, certainly, can be witty and engaging – but too many flip asides, too many subjects closed off with a quip and a shrug, make in the end for an incomplete read. They also sit oddly beside the book's extensive, insufficiently edited chunks of interviews with people who are sometimes extremely interesting, and sometimes quite the opposite.

The result is neither fish nor fowl. Early on, McCrum is advised by a Melbourne salesman that if he wants commercial success Down Under, his best approach is to "Tyke the piss" – and when he does so, it's often sharp. But to his credit, he's evidently not cruel or insensitive enough to go all the way down that road, and when he trips up over dark secrets, or gnaws away at troubling issues, humour fades into unresolved concern. Eventually you want to cry out: Could you make your mind up? Do you like it or don't you? Or, indeed, what aspect?



'Aspects' of Oz

Pete Davies treks through the outback

ingo won

Paperbacks

By Boyd Tonkin

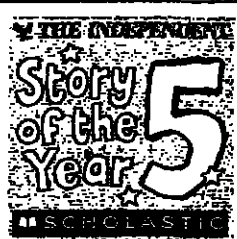
Last Orders by Graham Swift (Picador, £5.99) In the 1996 Booker winner, four veteran Sarf Londoners carry their butcher-pal's ashes to Margate in a sort of latterday *Canterbury Tale*. Marked by deep craft and complex decency, this seems nonetheless to be a novel that many readers admire rather than love. Why? Swift is that troublesome animal, a writer's writer. As with subtle chamber music, his weaving of the four distinct voices as they review their tangled lives may wow the pros but leave the laity cold. Still, it's hard to fault the stoic wisdom of this rueful crew as they approach their terminus (in every sense). "What you've got to understand is the nature of the goods. Which is perishable."

How to be a Minister by Gerald Kaufman (Faber, £8.99) The Commons' best (and only?) expert on classic Hollywood musicals dusts down his 1980 primer on another kind of song-and-dance. Aimed at promoted party hacks with their hands on the Red Boxes at last, Kaufman's guide to survival in Whitehall advises office holders how to stop the wives of the civil service from turning them "into a pod straight out of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*". Robust, witty and sardonic, his book only loses the plot in its dated anecdotes. Tales of Our Hero. In his glory days of the 1970s, trumping the Sir Humphreys to rescue a widget mill in Pontefract or Dewsbury have all the sepia charm of a *Wakes Week* photo album. Laugh? I almost went out for beer and sandwiches with the TUC.

Hungry Ghosts: China's secret famine by Jasper Becker (John Murray, £13) The media requiems for Deng Xiaoping have given the impression that only the Tiananmen Square carnage seriously blotted the Great Reformer's copybook. Yet, in his loyal Maoist days of the

mid-1950s, Deng helped launch the mis-named Great Leap Forward in the Chinese countryside. Botched collectivisation and Stalinist mumbo-jumbo dressed up as genetic science managed to ruin the rural economy. A staggering total of up to 30 million peasants may have starved from 1958 to 1962 in this, the century's worst man-made calamity. As for Deng, Becker's superbly researched and horrifying history shows that he did, in time, come to respect the damning evidence. He launched a campaign to reverse the deadly policies in favour of sane farming, made an enemy of Mao and so provoked his own disgrace during the Cultural Revolution. On Deng's part, the famine may count as a fatal blunder rather than a crime – but that made little difference to its victims.

The Unruly Queen by Flora Fraser (Papermac, £10) Although there are sinister parallels between our current version of the Princess of Wales and poor Caroline of Brunswick, whose fate it was to marry the Prince Regent in 1795 – they both suffered from crowded marriage syndrome, caused constitutional uproar by separating from their husbands and were suspicious of palace courtiers – Diana wins hands down when it comes to fashion. Caroline, as Flora Fraser notes in this excellent biography, was a short, dumpy sallow who owned nothing but coarse petticoats, wore her stockings inside out and, on the eve of her wedding, had to be given "some frank instructions about her washing habits" by Lord Malmesbury. It's hardly surprising that Caroline finally took revenge on her adopted country, attempting to storm Parliament during the Coronation and asking while on a visit to inspect the maimed pensioners at Greenwich Hospital: "Do all Englishmen have only one arm or leg?"



Can you write a winning short story for 6-9 year-old children?

Don't miss The Tabloid next Thursday for details of the 1997 Story of the Year competition. First prize is £2,000, with £500 for the two runners up – and to celebrate the competition's fifth birthday, we will be awarding a special trophy to all three. The winning story

will be published in the *Independent Magazine*, and the top 10 stories will appear in a specially commissioned anthology from Scholastic Children's Books. So sharpen those pencils – and find out on Thursday about another celebrity's bedtime stories.

The worm in the bud

Harriet Paterson slips into a smooth tale of eastern promise

Silk by Alessandro Baricco, Harvill, £6.99

Alessandro Baricco is hot publishing property in Italy, a rare commodity in a country where literary fiction is struggling to keep its head above water. He wins prizes with ease for his novels, of which this is the third. An effortless little book, *Silk* is the work of an author who knows how to please – as do his publishers, who have wrapped the book in the smoothest, silkiest laminate you're likely to find. The text is set like a long prose poem, tiny chapters surrounded by acres of white space, encouraging the tranquil sensations which reading the book produces.

Hervé Joncour, a young 19th-century merchant, buys silkworms for a living. As an epidemic which affects the silkworms spreads through Europe, Hervé travels further and further to find unblemished eggs: beyond the Mediterranean, to Syria

and Egypt. The prosperity of his home town in the south of France depends upon his annual delivery.

Eventually the only country that remains uncontaminated is Japan, where foreigners are hanged on sight, but where silkworms superior to all others are rumoured to exist. Carrying a fortune in gold, Hervé must travel to the end of the world, smuggle himself into the forbidden country and procure the worms. He has an exacting circumscribed amount of time to make it back home before the eggs hatch.

The fact that a love story grows out of this already romantic premise comes as no surprise. Baricco makes spare but sufficient use of ritual elements of Japanese sensuality as perceived by the western mind – bathing ceremonies, loose kimonos, shadows on rice-paper walls.

His writing shows an author in unquestioned control of his vocabulary, his phrases brief but precisely



Scene of a crime: before and after view of the vandalised figures of Henry Moore's sculpture, *The King and Queen* PHOTO: FRANK RYAN

Smash and gab

James Hall wonders why so many critics have joined the demolition business

The Destruction of Art: Iconoclasm and Vandalism since the French Revolution by Dario Gamboni, Reaktion Books, £25

After a day at the British Museum in 1855, the American writer Nathaniel Hawthorne announced with the confidence born of belonging to a youthful nation: "We do not recognize for rubbish what is really rubbish". Four years later, he was even more forthright in *The Marble Faun*, a novel set in Rome. "All towns should be made capable of purification by fire, or of decay within each half-century. Otherwise, they become the hereditary haunts of vermin and noisomeness, besides standing apart from the possibility of improvements."

Cultural cleansing is the subject of Dario Gamboni's *The Destruction of Art*, a well-illustrated and level-headed study of iconoclasm and vandalism since the French Revolution. The subject of iconoclasm is currently a growth industry, but what makes Gamboni's book particularly useful is his refusal to limit himself to high-profile attacks on public sculpture, whether they be Communist monuments in eastern Europe or avant-garde sculptures like Richard Serra's "Tilted Arc". He also discusses more subtle and legalised forms of iconoclasm, perpetrated from above by artists, restorers and museum officials.

Indeed, for Gamboni, our society is predicated on iconoclasm. An obvious example would be the

recent advertising campaign urging us to "chuck out your chintz".

Gamboni starts with the French Revolution because destruction and preservation were linked here as never before. Monuments to the *ancien régime* were systematically destroyed, and artworks stripped from palaces and churches. The worst instance of revolutionary vandalism (the term was coined in 1794) occurred in the abbey of St Denis, where the kings of France had been buried since the middle ages. There, 51 tombs were destroyed during three days of uninterrupted demolition.

But from this holocaust arose the idea of patrimony and national heritage. The best old-master paintings were taken to the Louvre, which was founded by the revolutionaries. This action was justified on the grounds that, although many art works were dedicated to the ruling classes, they were also testaments to the work of artists, and embodied values that transcended the circumstances of their commission.

The revolutionaries found it much harder to accept the timeless artistic status of French sculpture. Nonetheless, the painter Alexander Lenoir did rescue some sculptures to establish the short-lived Museum of French Monuments. Lenoir provided the first chronological survey of French sculpture and wrote the first systematic catalogue. In order to make his points about the development of sculpture, however, Lenoir changed the appearance of many works beyond recognition. In

1834, Prosper Mérimée observed that clumsy restorers were more dangerous enemies of monuments than Protestants and *sans-culottes*.

Gamboni's best chapter explores the recent demise of communist monuments in Eastern Europe. Many statues were destroyed, and a particularly popular form of destruction was to put a cable round the neck of the figure and dangle it from a crane before dropping it on the ground. Symbolic hanging is the fate that awaited the statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky, founder of the KGB. Nonetheless, the iconoclasm has not been unanimously approved. Some Muscovites wanted the Dzerzhinsky monument to remain because it was "a part of our history". One woman had hoped to be able to tell her son in future that "this guy was a bastard". With hindsight, some monuments have come to seem a lesser evil, for they are usually replaced by hoardings for Coca-Cola and Mercedes-Benz.

Successors to Lenoir's Museum of French Monuments have been established. A statue park was set up in Moscow near the Tretyakov Gallery (Russia's equivalent of the Tate). However, many statues were simply dumped on the ground in a fragmented and graffiti-covered state. Another sculpture park was opened in 1993 in Budapest: 61 monuments that had suffered repeated attacks were sent there and a poem, "A Sentence on Tyranny", greets visitors at the entrance. These parks work on a similar principle to the Nazis'

Degenerate Art exhibitions. But no doubt they will soon seem as evocative as Roman ruins.

Gamboni brings together a great deal of fascinating information, but he does not really marshal his evidence into a sustained argument. *The Destruction of Art* reads a bit like an anthology of anecdotes. The trouble is that it is almost impossible to identify a psychology of iconoclasm. There are almost as many motives as iconoclasts. The most politically incorrect explanation is given in a cartoon from the 1960s by Ronald Searle, "The Philistines": disabled men threaten gigantic sculptural fragments representing the body part that lack.

In the past ten years, there has been a flurry of works in which iconoclasm is the central theme, from academic studies, such as David Freedberg's *The Power of Images* (1989) to Andrew Graham-Dixon's TV series, *A History of British Art* (1996). A new genre of art-book documents in detail the birth, life and death of a public sculpture: Richard Serra's "Tilted Arc" (1991) or Rachel Whiteread's "House" (1995). So why is iconoclasm now being brought into the open? The most obvious reason is that it is the perfect *fin-de-siècle* theme. It is as death-fixated as any hospital drama or film by Quentin Tarantino. Whereas a late-1980s artist like Jeff Koons was obsessed with sex, a 1990s superstar like Damien Hirst is primarily interested in death. We're all hanging around the scene of a crime, looking for casualties.

A week in books

The oddest revelations in Gary O'Connor's much-touted life of Peggy Ashcroft involve the great thespian's passion for cricket. Playing Margaret of Anjou at Stratford in 1963, the *grande dame* of the stage, tucked a radio transmitter into her bra during rehearsals so she could listen to the Test Match. She also organised a Lancashire-Yorkshire charity match: E M E Ashcroft, bowled Len Hutton, 16. Later, cricket chatter would sustain a long "chase affair" with Harold Pinter.

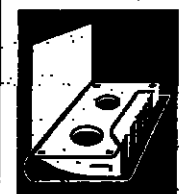
Indeed, O'Connor's *The Secret Woman* (Weidenfeld, £20) omits to notice that – if you ignore her first and last husbands, and the passing trade – Dame Peggy's now-famous roster of celebrity lovers makes up an eleven. This team bats all the way down, with a slight loss of sparkle in the middle: J B Priestley, Paul Robeson, Walter Sickert, Mark Dignam, Theodore Komisarjevsky, Michel Saint-Denis, Billy Buchan (John's son), Burgess Meredith, Tony Britton, William Devlin, George Devine. (Pinter could be the non-playing coach.) As a new twist to the showbiz bio, this has potential. Coming soon: Dame Edith Evans and the *catenaccio* defence.

After finishing O'Connor's book, you crave some escape from the stultifying limits of its genre. As a "property" as well as a text, it reveals what's gone wrong with the tacky trade in private lives. Extracted in the press for the usual handsome fee attached to sex with the stars, the mushy passages that name those paramours will become the book for most of its audience. Few will bother now about its critical lapses.

Before she died in 1991, Dame Peggy worked with Michael Billington on a sound survey of her roles, from Juliet to *The Jewel in the Crown*. Sex, in other words, is all O'Connor has to sell, as he can't quote from letters (the children refused him permission). Even so, he fails to build a solid bridge between the turbulent off-stage soul and the regal, even chilly star. And his syntax brings to mind a knitting-basket after the attentions of a pair of frisky kittens. We even learn that "Harriet, Walter first met Peggy when she was 74" – bad news for Peggy when she was 74 – but needs an editor when the papers will bombard you with big cheques for soft-centred little-fattle? The book is a meretricious muddle. And so is the publishing culture that wraps shabby goods in sensation-seeking hype.

Boyd Tonkin

Audiobooks



Classic Railway Murders (CSA Tapes, 2hrs 45 mins, £8.99) offers four tales from the age of steam. Well-contrasted writers, first-rate production: versatile readings by Patrick Malahide. Plays work well heard rather than seen, especially when they offer, as Oscar Wilde always does, an aphorism a minute. *Lady Windermere's Fan* (Naxos, 1hr 43 mins, £7.99) is a topical tale in the context of today's moral panic, and the final scene between the mysterious Mrs Eryane (Juliet Stevenson) and Lady Windermere (Sarah Fielding) is powerful theatre.

Christina Hardyment



«The ease and high silken finish suggest that Baricco is coasting»

cadenced – in Guido Waldman's translation, as in the original. Here there will be no image out of place, no unruly ordering of words. Perhaps the only stylistic lapse comes towards the end, where he indulges in a burst of stream-of-consciousness, criticism which it is hard not to find comic in the midst of an otherwise restrained work.

Baricco is less interested in historical detail than in creating a broadly poetic tale which leaves behind a number of distinct *tableaux*: a sky full of precious exotic birds released from their aviary, two men sitting

looking out over a lake where a concubine is swimming, an orange dress and two straw sandals left lying on the ground.

The ease and high silken finish of the writing suggest that Baricco is coasting after his more substantial novels, especially *Oceanic Motel* with its probing questions about the nature of memory. Nevertheless, this small but perfectly formed novella offers an elegant and unfrenzied entry into his work; and if a writer wishes to switch from sustained narrative verse to the art of haiku, then who am I to argue?

Surface tensions

Elisa Segrave faces the ugly truth about cosmetic surgery

Skin by Joanna Briscoe, Phoenix House, £16.99

You will certainly never want a face-lift after reading this novel. Its heroine Adèle Meier, a former beauty and a best-selling author who invented a subversive character called Loulou, finds herself in middle-age, living alone in Paris. She is no longer with Laurence, her great love, whom she met in New York as a young woman. Once, Laurence left his wife and baby for her. Now he has returned to England and married a conventional English wife.

Joanna Briscoe describes in graphic detail the facial operations Adèle embarks on in Paris in order to stave off the signs of approaching age: "the surgeon removed a string of fat from the patient's eyelid. This was shining yellow and lumpy in texture" while "the patient's cheek... flopped over her ear, unattached, rooted only at the mouth, nose and eyes". In between each operation and its painful after-effects, Adèle's past unfolds. Her Austrian parents emigrated to Virginia with 14-year-old Adèle, her older sister Kati and her two brothers John and Karl. Her father abandoned them for a local woman while Adèle was still a teenager. A few years later her mother died of a heart attack. Adèle went north, first to New Jersey, then to New York.

Adèle's narcissism in middle age makes her seem unsympathetic. We do not learn about her girlhood until later. I am not sure how far Briscoe intended to create an immediately unlikeable character. Adèle's cold-blooded seductions of two young men in Paris, undertaken

mainly to convince herself that she still has sexual power, are described with skilful eroticism. I must admit to envy – both of Briscoe for her writing and of Adèle herself for nailing two young men at her age. Nonetheless, this lack of emotion makes these scenes ultimately chilling. Indeed, apart from her love for her stepdaughter, Melina (hospitalised in England with anorexia), Adèle often seems so self-absorbed that I found it difficult to believe that she had written a best-selling book with universal appeal.

"Loulou has very exotic sex and manipulates men and says what most women only dare to think in their secret minds," Adèle says, explaining her book's success to an audience of fans in Paris. But although she has won acclaim for inventing a contemporary feminist idol, Adèle knows that she has always relied heavily on male admiration. "I always needed my Holy Grail, the male with his hormones and his gifts to me," she admits to hering. And yet, long ago in New York, during her heyday period as a young beauty, she had already half-realised the flip side of sexual magnetism. "I was excited by men as I was injured by men. It's commonplace... men make you feel so terrible, so high, you are their circus animal, pretty pet and leash."

This accomplished, intelligent novel throws up interesting questions. Are beautiful women different? Is ageing actually worse for them, because they are accustomed to depend on their looks? Do very beautiful women often become narcissistic when young?

In one poignant moment, while recovering from facial surgery, Adèle remembers the older women she used to see on

the Upper East Side where – in her twenties, at the height of her attractiveness – she worked as personal secretary to a German banker's wife. She never gave these women and their face-lifts more than a passing thought but now, alone in Paris, she recalls the "shark grin of effort stretching their features" and their eyes, "widened with simulated youth and yet precisely blank, a dull dead glitter".

Worrying, too late, about the cycle of operations she has inflicted on herself, she realises that she is no different from them. "The surgical interventions create a homogenised tribe: women who resemble each other, sisters under the skin." Skin has some beautiful passages, in particular when Adèle tells how she and Laurence first fell in love. I also liked the descriptions of her youth in New York, where, after a stint in the Martha Washington women's hostel and some unsatisfactory flat-shares, she settles with two girlfriends in "a brownstone in the dusty and blossomed upper reaches of Greenwich Village, on West 13th Street, where the white church struck bells and Sixth Avenue was a clutter of shoe repairs and discount shops".

There are also many memorable vignettes and pithy remarks about men, as when Laurence first makes love to her. "He was different, in the way that men are when they are erect and as vulnerable as boys with sticks, and sinewed and Biblical and alarming."

But I suspect that *Skin* will be remembered most for its powerful evocation of panic and loneliness: of that disturbing moment when every woman is forced to realise, for the first time, that she too will grow old.

سكوا من الأصل

travel & outdoors

Cathedral to coast in Devon and Cornwall 16/17
Will wolves roam the Highlands again? 18
The garden rescuers .. 19



Crossing six time zones, the Trans-Mongolian Express breaks many other barriers. PHOTOGRAPH BY LANDMANN/SP



Through Russia with love

This afternoon a party of intrepid British astronomers departs from Moscow by train for Mongolia and China. Nine years ago, Jeremy Atiyah travelled the other way, through a quite different world

Moscow was only 24 hours east, but the Russian capital could have been a light year back down the track. That winter in Berlin the fog over Alexanderplatz still had the sad smell of coal dust and Communism, but I didn't care. Metres away, cocooned in its wall, West Berlin was a city of dreams. Its centre comprised budget supermarkets, designer sex shops, ongoing student demonstrations and one memento of the Second World War: the ruined Kaiser Wilhelm Church. Somewhere out there, among the punks in Bismarck Park and the *grandes dames* wearing fur coats on Ku'damm, was a girl called Xiaosong, dressed in red for her first day in the free West. On a winter's day in the city of dreams, I was looking for a girl from Communist China.

Was it only seven days since we had met, in the restaurant car of a train somewhere in the vicinity of Mongolia? Professor Zhang and his comrades were eating their last Chinese dinner, and teaching me how to use chopsticks. "This is the best day of our lives," giggled the professor. Yes, China was that bad. All these worn-out intellectuals were leaving their families for the sake of science studentships in Continental Europe. Only Xiaosong in the outsized red coat was different; she plonked herself at the table with a smile to light up the wintry Mongolian steppe for ever. "Literature," she whispered in a pure, seamless accent. "In Deutschland. You don't speak German?" I didn't.

"Oh yes," Professor Zhang confided in me the next morning. "M-m-m-many Chinese girls want to m-m-m-marry Western men." Outside, the sun shone weakly on a treeless, snow-flecked land and I wondered why he was telling me this. It transpired that he was carrying in his pocket lists of Chinese women seeking marital alliances with Western men. But apart from me, the only other man in our carriage was a melancholy Yugoslav with a suitcase full of vodka.

The crowded carriages at the other end of the train were more promising for thoughts of marriage. Xiaosong was there for a start. I decided to visit her, hauling open the connecting carriage-doors one by one, exposing myself to the din of wheels and blasts of ferocious winter. In the last carriage, I found her ensconced in a compartment with a group of Chinese boys, also, perhaps, going to West Germany to study literature.

"Oh no. We are going to East Germany," one of them explained. "To work in the mines."

I was mumbling something about short straws when one Erhard Kempe suddenly arrived from the bathroom. He had a

morose expression and pronounced German "Charmant". East German police? I wish he had been. He turned out to be a flakey West German tourist from Hannover with a berth in the same compartment as Xiaosong.

Undaunted, I returned that evening with a bottle of brandy which I drank all by myself. I ate Xiaosong's chocolates impulsively, admired her tape of Chinese pop music and requested that she write out the incomprehensible lyrics of one of the songs, "Maybe in Winter". Erhard fought back by embarking on a lengthy explanation of the "Charmant" education system. Fortunately, we still had the whole of Russia to cross.

The Soviet Union arrived at midnight with lights on the snow, a watch-tower, barbed wire, and soldiers in long coats running beside the train. "I h-h-hate Russia," said Professor Zhang in a high-pitched whisper, as blond men probed at his bulging briefcase. Chugging alongside Lake Baikal later, I sat alone, musing the meaningless sounds of "Maybe in Winter", while the frozen lake buckled and cracked and heaped itself into mounds of rubble, shining a mysterious blue against the snow-laden sky.

Professor Zhang was obsessed with my conjugal status. He appeared daily at my doorway, asking when I would marry. Not in the near future, I barked, tetchily. Siberia, and Erhard's long-winded accounts of German history, were wearing me down. For three days, the landscape consisted of melancholy birch forests, interspersed by villages of wooden houses suffocating under the continuous snow. At Novosibirsk I changed money with a man in a dirty coat; at Sverdlovsk I bought a hard-boiled egg. On the last day Xiaosong dropped by to give me a contact address - in Hannover.

There was no red carpet for our final

arrival in Moscow. Instead, the platform was covered in a thick, dirty slush. In dribs and drabs, the passengers from China transferred across town to Belarusskaya Station, where I volunteered to stand in a Soviet queue to make our onward reservations to Berlin. I stood in it, heroically, for four hours.

Only in mid-afternoon was I ready for a touristic rampage round Moscow with my Chinese bride-to-be. As it turned out, Xiaosong had already asked Professor Zhang and eight other Chinese friends to join us, along with Erhard Kempe. Never mind. Wet, romantic snow was falling as darkness fell. I saw uneven pavements, pink stucco and tall women on the underground escalators with pale faces and furry hats. In the streets, the last rays of a maverick sun suddenly fell on to the spires of the Kremlin. *En masse*, we stormed the Hotel Rossiya on Red Square for a round of vodkas, for which I ostentatiously emptied my wallet.

From Moscow to Berlin, we still had another 24 hours of Pot Noodles and Chinese tea, but by now emotional excitement and brandy was destroying my mind. The train was crowded and overheated, and I awoke to the sounds of raucous, collective snoring. Discomfited, I sat in the half-lit corridor to wait for a grey day to slide past over Poland. Outside, on the plains, the last shreds of snow had almost gone.

Professor Zhang was jubilant at having smuggled his dollars through Russia in the lining of his briefcase. Erhard was waxing ever more eloquent as we approached his homeland. But I was tired. And when they appeared, the East German border police - with their fat faces, military accents, torches, peaked caps and shining boots - looked remarkably like unreconstructed Nazis. Our belongings were microscopically examined; Professor Zhang was suddenly ordered to leave the train. Horror! There he was, now speechless with fear, putting on three pairs of trousers, manically packing away his pots and cups and chopsticks. The last we saw of him, he stood alone, a little man on the platform beside a ton of luggage. The winter took on a nightmarish hue.

East Berlin was on us before we knew it, and Xiaosong was the next to disappear. The Ostbahnhof was infernally dark, packed with shrieking, groaning engines and hissing with jets of steam. Soviet soldiers in long coats stood like ghosts in the shadows. One minute Xiaosong was there - the next she had gone. I had visions of a plot. Victims picked off one by one! I blundered about emotionally in the darkness, convinced that no one could escape Communism in winter.

Amid the panic, a familiar face loomed out of the darkness: Erhard Kempe. "Ver

is the young lady?" he exclaimed, roughly. Well, at least he didn't know either. Instead he angrily escorted me through the darkness to the West Berlin train where I found the only remaining Chinese, Yu Wei, in a colossal furry hat, mumbling through his hand about wanting to see the West. He had just two minutes to wait. The train creaked through Alexanderplatz and then over the Berlin Wall itself. The ghastly no-man's-land with its floodlights illuminating the death-strip

inspired Yu Wei, oddly, to start invoking Proust and Yeats as the embodiment of his Western dream.

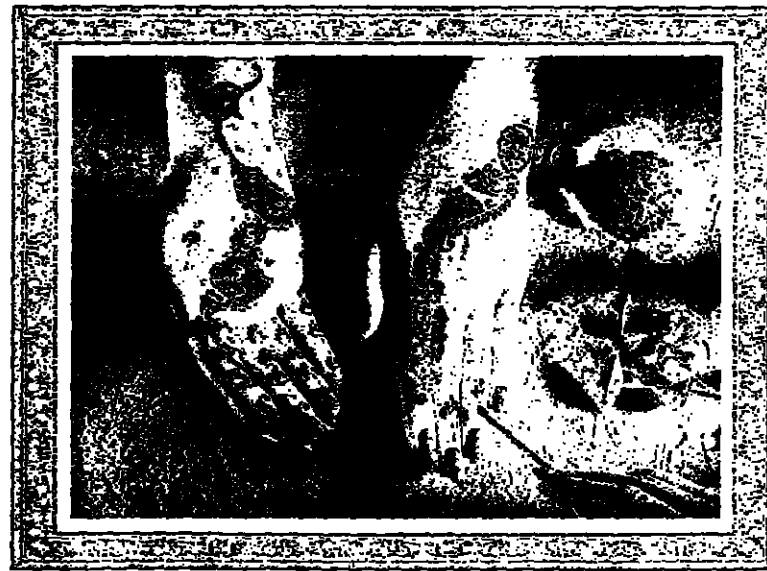
I couldn't help thinking that the West was mainly about nice cars and decent accommodation. Or so I told myself, gloomily, as I checked into a hotel later that night. Yu Wei had presented me with his furry winter hat and departed for Frankfurt, while Erhard had bought me a copy of *The Times*. "A real piece of, ah, 'Charman' hospitality," he had said,

grasping my hand like a spanner before marching away into the mist.

In bed at last, I drifted into the dreams of West Berlin. Would the skateboarders around the Kaiser Wilhelm Church be feeling the cold tomorrow morning? Would I find the girl from Communist China? The tune of "Maybe in Winter" began playing in my mind. One day, I dreamt, Xiaosong would tell me what its lyrics meant.

Jeremy Atiyah married Xiaosong in 1991

Traditions of Arabia



HENNA

A reddish dye obtained from powdered leaves, henna has traditionally been used by the women of Arabia to stain the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet for weddings and other festivals. The simple geometric patterns of the past have given way over the years to more flowery designs.

Luxury and Adventure

Arabia, a land of mystery

travellers for centuries.

cover why. Tradition and

desert safari. The excitement of sand skiing, dune driving and camel racing. Sunny blue skies and

clean uncrowded beaches. Three fine golf courses. Superb watersports. Luxury hotels and fine

dining. Fabulous shopping and lively

all this and more in Dubai, with a choice

to an unforgettable holiday experience.

and legend, has captivated

Today, Dubai invites you to dis-

hospitality. The adventure of a

Decide on Dubai.

of 65 airlines to fly you

nightlife. Discover

of 65 airlines to fly you

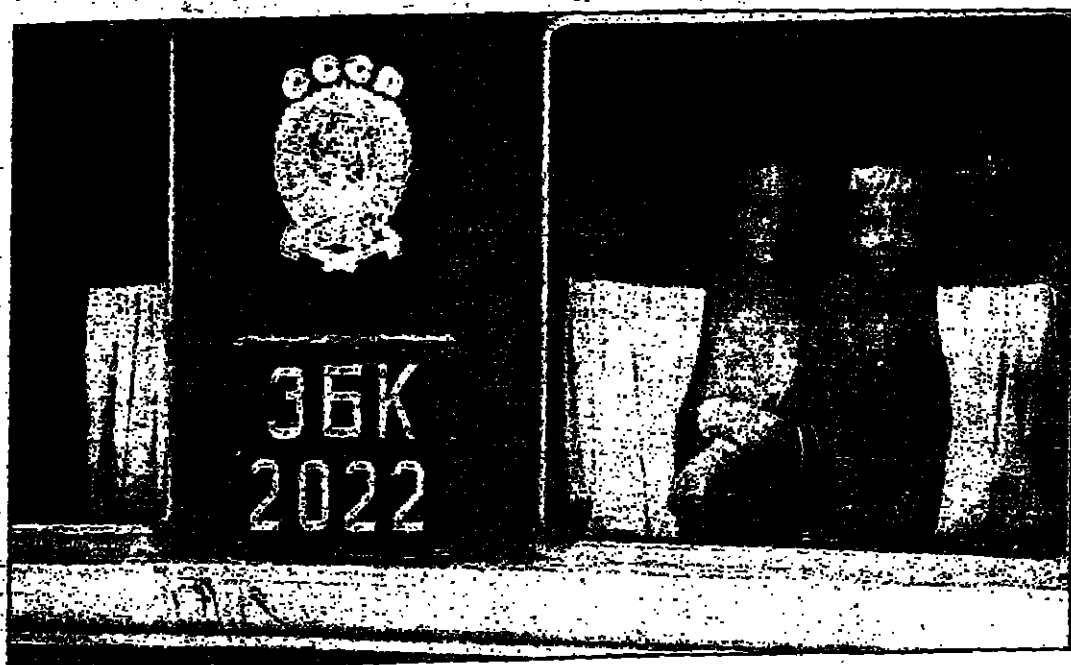
Decide on Dubai.

The Dubai Experience



GOVERNMENT OF DUBAI
DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND COMMERCE MARKETING
125 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5EA, U.K. Brochure line (24 hours) Tel: (0171) 839 0581

Berlin or bust: the train carried the hopes of Chinese and East Europeans who made the break to the West





Simon Calder

'The only thing that worked on air-conditioned stock was the supplement you paid for it'

Rail service," says a new report from a thoroughly reliable source, "continues to slide into oblivion, as the newly privatised railways simply disperse with those few passenger trains they inherited."

You may be relieved to learn that the country thus described is not Britain, but Brazil. The source is the new Thomas Cook *Overseas Timeable*, published today at £8.40. Its staid air of resignation about life for the train traveller in Latin America makes Britain's rail system seem a picture of perfection.

The last edition reported that, in Ecuador, "all ENFE railcars have broken down and nothing is actually running at all." Evidence in the new timeable suggests this started a trend: "The organisation contracted to run passenger services on Bolivian Railways," reports the Editor, "has apparently ceased to operate any passenger trains."

Further north, "FNM in Mexico, in the throes of privatisation, still manages to provide some sort of service, although timekeeping is erratic. All diners are officially off, and sleepers run only at weekends, and then only on two trains..." A recent traveller assured us that the only thing that worked on air-conditioned stock was the supplement you paid to travel in it.

At least the compilers have helpful contacts in Latin America. If this year should find you travelling to Lebanon, please spare a thought for the loneliness of the Thomas Cook team in Peterborough:

"Lebanon has been a difficult nut for us to crack for a long time now, as no-one there really wants to talk to us."

"Please don't take all those silly Spanish coins home with you."

When the cabin steward on my Airtours day trip to Seville made this announcement, I cynically suspected (a) Anglo-chauvinism, and/or (b) a ploy to boost the profits of Britain's second-largest tour operator. But the appeal for loose change was in fact intended to amplify the funds of the Variety Club of Great Britain. And if you need any more persuasion to give to a good cause, take note that the peseta in your pocket may be worthless.

The treasury in Madrid has announced that older designs of coins are no longer legal tender in Spain. Old versions of the one-five and 25-peseta coins will not be accepted by shopkeepers. So instead of saving your spare change for the next trip to Spain, you may as well give the money to Airtours, which has special arrangements for converting old pesetas into new pounds for the Variety Club.

Cutting figures, carving lines

Stephen Wood reveals next season's ski fashions



Snow + Rock's retro 'pilot' outfit

Hold on to your bobble hats: "The 1997/8 winter season will not focus on the 'wild Seventies', 'modern style' or 'technical skiwear,'" says a report from this month's Munich winter sports fashion show, "but on the carving theme. Basically, carving lines [are] a mixture of casual snowboard fashion and technically sophisticated, sporty-looking skiwear."

That's the men sorted. "Ladies ski fashion is quite different, almost unaffected by the carving style," the report continues. "It focuses on the retro themes [of] snug-fitting lines and almost severe contours... waisted blouses with a hint of peplum and the occasional real or imitation fur collar." Although "the range of colours is enormous" - from coral via beige to black - "white is an absolute must for ladies, combined for contrast or on its own." And fabrics? "The glitter of gold and silver, the sheen of satin on tone-in-tone jacquards, layered micros, coarse-structured stretch, soft smoked inserts and shimmering shot fabrics are all back again."

My contribution to fashion has been limited: I bought this season's outfit from a rack at C&A in 1988. But I don't feel that anybody else has been trying recently, either. The last time I had a good laugh on the slopes was in 1990 when a friend of mine, normally to be seen wearing well cut double-breasted suits, turned up in a zebra-print one-piece. Sharon Campbell, fashion director for the Snow + Rock chain, agrees that recent skiwear has been "dead boring". And she has had great difficulty selling fashion items in the Nineties:

there are fewer skiers. "Those that are left are the serious enthusiasts - and, anyway, British skiers are conservative, and will always go for practical clothing made of waterproof, 'breathable' fabrics."

As you will have noticed, other European skiers take their outfits more seriously. And for Martin Phillips, who buys women's skiwear for C&A throughout Europe from its Düsseldorf office, spotting variations in taste is important: he can identify a skier's nationality at 100 paces. C&A's curiously named skiwear label, Rodeo, which dominates the UK market, is also sold on the Continent, but the garments to which it is attached differ.

"The big difference is between the German and French markets, which have almost nothing in common. The French like very classical, simple clothing, and natural materials; their market is dominated by 'technical' [sporting] skiwear. But the German market is much more fashion-oriented: they favour snowboarding styles, and go for those prints that I find so distasteful." He agrees with Sharon Campbell that "the style in Britain is now 'dressing down' rather than 'dressing up'. You can relate it to the street where there's more classic, Escada-type fashion around, less of a hip, fashionable look."

British skiers' conservatism is partly a result of general high street austerity, but Phillips (who talks nostalgically about the Eighties, when people were "spending money like water on skiwear") adds two other causes. First, "because school skiing trips have been cut back so drastically, the influence of young people has weakened:

the same people are going skiing, and they're getting older." Second, snowboarding hasn't taken off to the same extent in the UK as on the Continent, and skiing fashion has recently looked to snowboarders for inspiration.

Austerity does tend to take the fun out of fashion, and snowboarders' styles haven't put it back. Their late-grunge, "street" look - baggy shapes in drab colours - wouldn't bring a smile to anybody's face, the only mild diversion being its reading material: the proudly displayed labels (Billabong, Fishpaw, Fat Face) and bizarre slogans (one C&A teenager's parka carries the message "A special design for your great pleasure to wear", another the more enigmatic "MCP-9169"). Similarly, in this year's racks of technical skiwear uniforms, the decorative elements are largely textual, each one carrying a handful of swing tickets ("the Christmas tree effect", C&A's Martin Phillips calls it) proclaiming the virtues of its hi-tech fabric. Competition for expensive, "breathable" Gore-Tex is tough, since "Tactel 6", EcoTemp, Superskin, Entrant GII, Kaporous and Rhino Skin" not only live and breathe, but sing and dance, too.

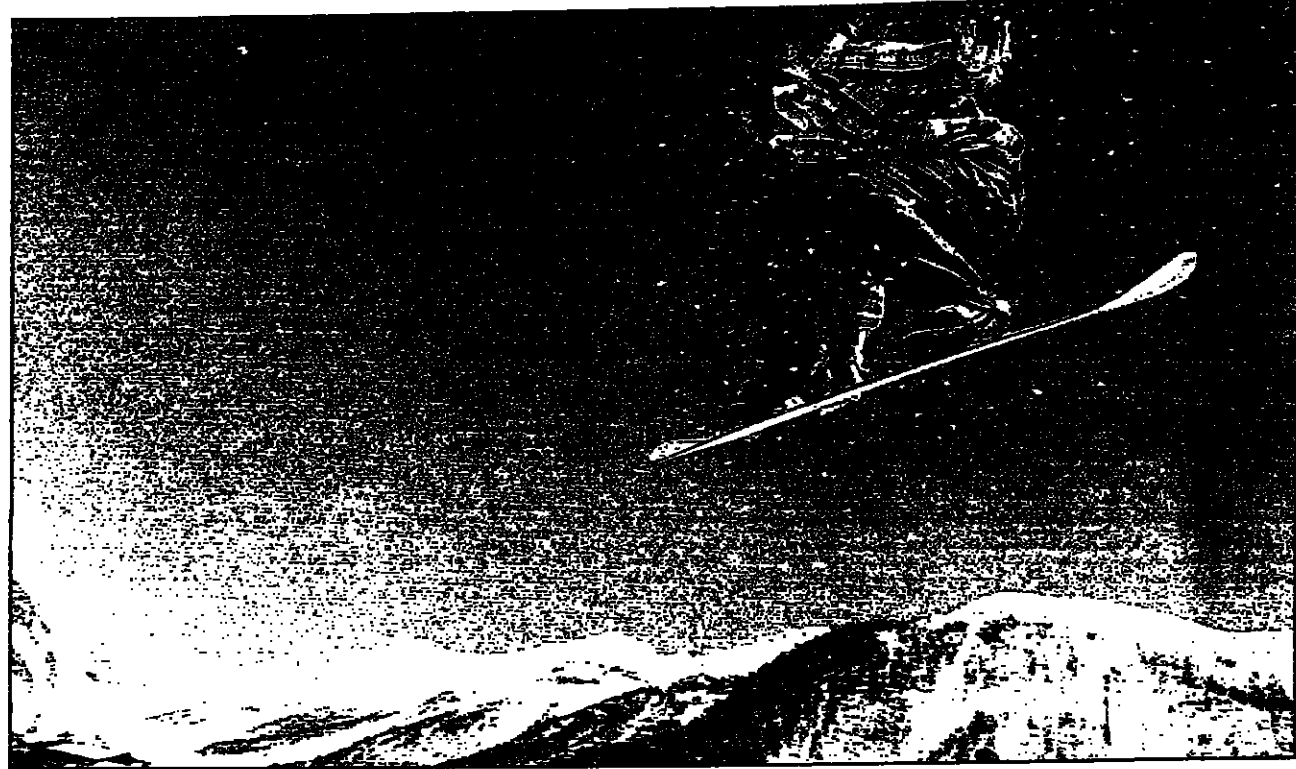
But the dark days are now over. I expressed some cynicism about next season's trends to Snow + Rock's Sharon Campbell: the Munich declaration that menswear would somehow combine snowboarding styles and technical skiwear under a buzz-word taken from this season's fashionable "carving" skis suggested desperation to me rather than confidence. And the "retro" look for women? That's

already retro: this season, Snow + Rock has been offering a one-piece "pilot" suit that looks like one of Amelia Earhart's cast-offs (price £479).

Campbell insists, however, that "next season the fashion element is coming back. Sales have been excellent at Snow + Rock this year, particularly of high-priced items: the demand for 'cheap-and-cheerful' outfits is declining, and the Mr Mountain look [the rugged, recession-style clothing adopted from mountaineers] has had its day. The manufacturers have had a very good season, too," she adds, "so there's more money - and confidence - going into their outfits for next year."

The "carving" look for men may be hard to define (the Swedish company, Mover, has embroidered a razor blade on one new jacket's lapel to establish its carving credentials), but Campbell identifies "a more streamlined shape, with a shorter jacket - half-way to a blouson gathered slightly at the waist"; the bright new colours include apple green and yellow. Retro outfits for women are a certainty: "the waisted jacket, with stretch trousers, looks very good on them," she says. And she is still optimistic about the tight-fitting "pilot" suits - a retro look made possible by a new technology for thinner insulation materials.

There will also be a retro look for men. But I don't think my puffy blue jacket and baggy black salopettes. 1988-style, are quite old enough yet to qualify. Perhaps I should do my bit to brighten up the slopes by buying something streamlined next season, maybe with a hint of peplum and soft smoked inserts? Perhaps not.



The snowboarder's late-grunge "street look" wouldn't bring a smile to anybody's face

PHOTOGRAPH: ALLSPORT

Quietly sloping off with the family

Lucy Hodges spent half-term in the Italian Alps at the new resort of Montecampione

Italians ski as they drive: they're fast, pushy and dangerous. But don't let that put you off skiing the Italian Alps. We have just had a pleasurable half-term week at a small, purpose-built resort, Montecampione, perched above Lake Isèo, two-and-a-half hours north east of Milan. Yes, the crazy skiers and their snowboarding pals were out in force at weekends, whooping and jumping their way down the slopes, but the weekdays were blissfully quiet - empty mountains, no lift queues, and gallant attendants who made a point of helping women skiers off the chairlifts. What more could you ask?

Montecampione is a new resort, built in the last five years and still undergoing construction. Straddling three mountains, it boasts two hotels, hundreds of apart-

ments, ice-skating, and 25km of slopes, as well as bars, restaurants and eateries. Most important of all, it has an elaborate artificial snow-making system.

We had brilliant weather all week: azure blue skies, dazzling sunshine, luminous sunsets, not a snowflake in sight. It has apparently been thus for a while. After heavy snow earlier on, it has been warm and sunny this month. And so the snow-making machines have come into their own, pumping out the soft stuff to coat the ice with a layer of skiable powder. Those slopes that did not have machines were lethal - to be avoided at all costs.

We were lucky that Montecampione was about our level. There were black runs, notably Nera Canalone, a thin tube that descended at a right angle, and Rossa

Dosso Beccherie, which was manageable before the sun had transformed the layer of ice/snow into slush.

This was not much of a place for the experts. Nor was it a paradise for mogul-jumpers. In fact, there was not a mogul field to be seen, just the occasional accidental hump where a snow machine had speckled out too much product. Those seeking thrills did have slalom racing, however. The two steep slalom runs were patronised almost continuously by speed freaks and given a wide berth by the rest of us.

But the scenery was still pretty awesome. Once you had ascended to a peak, the ski area opened up into a lunar landscape of wide runs and rolling bowls with breathtaking views of the southern Alps tapering off layer by layer to a distant horizon.

From the top of the highest runs you glimpsed the dark water of the lake below.

Our week was transformed by Mimo, a ski instructor who spoke ski-lingo English. Like many skiers, we are stuck in an intermediate rut, able to parallel-ski down most slopes but only in a hesitating and inelegant fashion. Mimo reminded us about raising and lowering our trunks and holding our arms out as if we were carrying a tea tray. In between lessons we worked at pretending to be waiters on skis.

We travelled to Montecampione as independent skiers, swapping a two-bedroom timeshare in Plymouth, New Hampshire, for a studio flat in our Italian development. It was the most convenient location of any ski resort we have stayed in, being situated just above a chairlift and

the ski pass office. Another of its great advantages, for someone who suffers from altitude sickness and has spent many unhappy hours feeling ill in Colorado, was that it was low, 1,827 metres, probably another reason for the dearth of snow.

The main drawback was a lack of eating places. Food figures large on any skiing agenda. Our bit of the resort contained a pizzeria where we ate three times and a trattoria where we ate once. Full stop. Otherwise you had to venture down the treacherous 11km of hairpin bends to Lovere, where there was more choice. We did find one family-run establishment locally, the Legazuolo, which provided hearty home-made stuffed pastas and rich stews, and good red *vino da tavola*. It was a great antidote to the pizzeria.

Ask us for more information on Scotland and we go to pieces.

Why not find out even more about the areas that interest you most? Choose up to 4 FREE brochures (from 14) by ticking the boxes below.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Ayrshire and the Isle of Arran | 8. Perthshire |
| 2. Dumfries & Galloway | 9. West Highlands & Islands |
| 3. Scottish Borders | 10. Loch Lomond, Stirling & Trossachs |
| 4. Edinburgh, Lothians & Glenridding | 11. Orkney |
| 5. Greater Glasgow & Clyde Valley | 12. Shetland |
| 6. Angus & Dundee | 13. The Highlands of Scotland |
| 7. The Kingdom of Fife & St Andrews | 14. The Western Isles |

When was your last break in Scotland? Year _____ Month _____ Haven't been yet ☐

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ POSTCODE _____

Send to: Scottish Tourist Board, Freeport, Dawson, Argyll PA21 7LZ

Or call (0904) 511 511 quoting 9710 (National Call Rates Apply, see holiday.scotland.net)

Data Protection: From time to time we permit other organisations to send you about their products or services. If you would prefer not to hear from such organisations, please tick here ☐

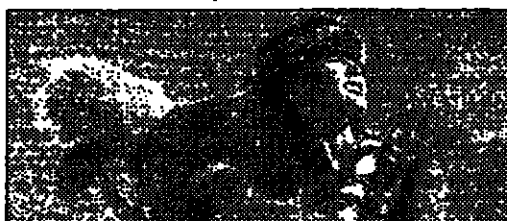


When will you go?

THE INDEPENDENT HAWAII

PARADISE FROM ONLY £699*

Departures: 1 May to 14 December 1997



What price paradise? Less than you could possibly imagine on this incredible value holiday.

You'll stay in the famous resort of Waialeale on the island of Oahu. There are so many exciting things to see and do - laze on the legendary two and a half mile long beach, visit Pearl Harbor, Sea Life Park, the extinct volcano Diamond Head, the Polynesian Cultural Center, perhaps spend a day in the dazzling capital of Honolulu.

For watersports enthusiasts there's surfing, sailing and scuba diving and the restaurants, shopping and nightlife are fantastic. In short, there's something for everyone. You stay in the Outrigger Maile Sky Court Hotel. Facilities include pool, whirlpool spa, snack shop, cocktail lounge and TGI Friday's restaurant.

INCLUDED IN THE PRICE:

- 9 nights' accommodation sharing a twin room with private facilities
- Scheduled mid-week flights to Honolulu from London Heathrow
- Traditional Lei greeting
- Holiday Delay Insurance
- Airport taxes, security charges and Air Passenger Duty
- Services of Page & Moy's local representatives
- Airport transfers

*£699 per person during 1st Nov-14th Dec (based on 2 people sharing). Manchester departures available at a supplement - ask for details.

FOR FULL DETAILS AND A BOOKING FORM Complete the coupon in block capitals and send to: Hawaii Holiday, Page & Moy Ltd, 130-140 London Road, Leicester LE2 1BN.

OR CALL THE HOLIDAY BROCHURE HOTLINE on 0116 250 7676 and quote ref: FQ7294/050 (24hr answerphone). This holiday is operated by Page & Moy Ltd. *NPA 01634 4701, 1221

PLEASE SEND ME FURTHER DETAILS OF THE HAWAII HOLIDAY

Name _____ Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____

Please tick the box if you do not wish to receive future offers from Newspaper Publishing plc or from companies approved by Newspaper Publishing plc. (P04)

K2794000

The Bloom of a Million Butterflies



The spectacular flora of Northern Cyprus is unlike anywhere in the world. Sitting amongst the multi colours of the Crown Anemone at Arapko Lawrence Durrell missed that the field appeared at first sight to be populated by a million butterflies.

The natural beauty here stirs all her visitors. Warm clear seas and uncluttered beaches fringe a hinterland of pine-scented hills, citrus groves, and endless intriguing antiquities. North Cyprus is truly the spirit and soul of Cyprus.

NORTH CYPRUS Tel 0541 55 56 50 for a brochure, or call 0171 631 1930 The Spirit and Soul of Cyprus for more information.

NORTH CYPRUS TOURIST OFFICE, 29 BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON, WC1B 3EG.

هكذا من الأصل



something to declare

World guide to where to be mugged

Theft threats around the world, according to the Foreign Office Travel Advice Unit (0171-238 4503):

Indonesia: Be alert. There has been an increase in petty crime against foreigners, including several incidents of knife attacks in the town of Brastagi in Sumatra and while climbing Mount Sibayak nearby. (The *Independent* comments that one of our correspondents fairly recently spent four peaceful days in Brastagi, "a friendly, quiet little town. The place where you really need to watch out for yourself is Medan, an hour's bus ride away. People in Brastagi will warn you that foreigners in this big city are invariably hassled, pickpocketing is rife and mugging common.")

Iran: There has recently been a number of cases of tourists being asked for identification by bogus policemen, who have then made off with the visitors' wallets and currency. Keep passports separate from other valuables.

Madagascar: There is a

danger of innigging and pickpocketing in urban areas. Precautions should be taken in crowded areas such as the popular Antananarivo market. Do not carry excessive amounts of money or wear jewellery, wristwatches, etc. It is advisable to carry a photocopy of your passport.

Sierra Leone: There has been an increase in reported incidents of armed robbery in the past six months.

Swaziland: There is a growing number of muggings, burglaries and car thefts, with expatriates being targeted. Several vehicles have been taken at gunpoint. It is inadvisable to pick up hitchhikers.

Tanzania: Incidents of mugging and theft are common, especially on public transport and beaches. Food should not be accepted from strangers as it may be drugged. Armed car thefts, particularly of four-wheel-drive vehicles, occur fairly frequently, and may be accompanied by personal violence.

True or false

The BBC will organise your holiday for you

True, if you are prepared to pledge your holiday cash to the Corporation and let BBC2 select a destination for you. The idea is that you give your holiday preferences and money to a team of experts, who will

endeavour to come up with the ideal trip for your budget. The ensuing holiday will be captured on camera, and the results transmitted during the summer.

If this appeals, call Ginny on 0161-244 3649.

A likely story

"The world's favourite airline"

Like the Carlsberg claim – "probably the best lager in the world" – BA's assertion is an easy one to make: there is no scientific standard for judging mass-produced lager or air travel. But for British long-haul leisure travellers surveyed by Austravel, "the world's favourite" barely rates a mention.

The questionnaire, completed by 15,000 flyers, covered five categories on more than 20 airlines. For politeness, Austravel has published only the top 10 in

countless British Airways ads each category. British Airways scrapes in at number 10 for "helpfulness and manner of cabin crew", to BA's chagrin, its charter rival Britannia is third, behind Singapore Airlines and All Nippon Airlines of Japan. These also rate highly in the categories where BA is absent: catering, comfort, entertainment and value for money. The last category was won easily by All Nippon, which may want to adopt the slogan: "We'll take more care of you".

Bargain of the week

The freedom of Newcastle-upon-Tyne: fly to the city with Gill Airways (0191-214 6666) – for example from Aberdeen, Belfast or Düsseldorf – keep hold of your boarding pass,

and the airline ticket desk at Newcastle airport will give you a ticket for the Metro system to take you from the airport station to anywhere on Tyne-side. The offer runs for the whole of March.



San Sebastián – a sensual surfeit of sights, sounds and tastes

PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD PASMORE/TSW

Basque out of the shade

This is, and yet isn't, Spain. The crowds of people taking an evening stroll through the old town, stopping off for a glass of wine, some tapas and a chat are doing it more quietly, less demonstratively, and they're wearing overcoats and carrying umbrellas.

Contrary to the popular saying, the rain in Spain falls mainly here, on the northern coast, which is why tourist brochures describe the local weather euphemistically as "mild and pleasant". Surprisingly, it was the climate that first marked San Sebastián out as a tourist resort in the mid-19th century, attracting Queen Isabella II and her court away from the summer heat of Madrid to this elegant town, recently rebuilt after a disastrous fire and blessed with a beautiful beach. It's appropriately named *la concha* (the shell), and it forms a perfect, semicircular bay, whose entrance is protected from the worst excesses of the Atlantic by a tiny island.

I've got a soft spot for *la concha*. Twenty-odd years ago, I spent my first ever night in Spain sleeping on it, lulled to sleep by the sound of the waves and the effects of a bottle of wine that I vaguely remember costing 10 pesetas. That was in August, mind you. This time (in winter), I'm only too happy to find a comfortable bed in a hotel and stroll down to the beach after breakfast.

San Sebastián is the capital of a culture that has finally stamped its name back on the map ... as well as the gastronomic dictionary, writes Mick Webb

It's on a Saturday morning like this,

out of season, that you realise how a beach in summer can be a mass human barbecue. But today it's a park where people are walking their dogs, jogging, reading the paper, while from this esplanade a less active contingent of us are happy to lean on the railings and simply watch.

Basque culture has reasserted itself, and the language banned for 40 years by Franco is now flourishing. The city has acquired a new name, Donostia; the names above the shops and bars are full of tongue-twisting clusters of consonants – Zumacalarriqui, Gorkotea; and the street signs are in two languages. Donostia has played its part in ETA's long and violent campaign for independence from the Spanish state and, on a damp Friday evening, the rush-hour traffic was slowed more than usual by a demonstration of 100 or so people moving silently and purposefully through the city centre. They were holding up placards with photos of their loved ones, ETA activists, who have been incarcerated in far-off Ceuta and Melilla. It's a regular Friday event,

watched with mild but respectful interest by shoppers and drinkers, and it reveals the other side of a city that's best known for a host of international music and film festivals, and as a rather upmarket seaside resort.

The city has its fair share of interesting museums, and churches, as well as some excellent walks, and I'd thoroughly recommend a couple of hours spent watching the game of pelota. It's fast, furious and fun, particularly the variety called *remonte*, which involves a wicker basket attached to the players' wrists, from which a ball is propelled against a wall at phenomenal speed. And if you think the game sounds odd, its singularity is matched by the betting – old tennis balls stuffed with peseta notes are thrown between spectators and bookmakers through the ever-thickening cigarette smoke.

The Basques are the great chefs of Spain, and here on their home turf their art flourishes. There are 11 Michelin stars scattered around the city's many restaurants, and the two best-known practitioners, Juan Mari Arzak and Pedro Subijana, convert

traditional recipes into the most elaborate modern dishes. Just a glance at the menu of El Akelarre, Sr Subijana's restaurant, sends our taste buds into an uncontrollable spin: fricassée of lambs' sweetbreads with vegetables and sautéed squids; hake fillets with clams in green sauce; citrus fruits in puff pastry with caramel; fresh cheese ice-cream.

At the other end of the price range, in the bars of the old town, you can eat well from the varied and colourful *pintxos*, as tapas are called here, though it is a good idea to like fish – particularly cod and hake, which reappear in 100 different guises and sauces.

The Donostiaras are extraordinary consumers of fresh fish – they consume seven or eight times as much as most other Europeans. The fish market is one of the shrines of the city. This originated by necessity. Historically, the poverty of this part of the Basque region meant that the only readily available source of food was fish, and the only major source of work was fishing. Now, by an irony of economic development, the relatively

well-off residents of San Sebastián can afford to buy fish, and to use it as the basis of the new Basque cuisine.

But there is another reason why the gastronomic arts have taken root here, hidden behind heavy doors. San Sebastián is full of gastronomic clubs, whose members gather together to talk and drink, but mainly to cook, rivaling each other in the preparation of delicious meals.

San Sebastián is very much the pretty face of the Basque country. If you go inland, the hills that provide such a scenic backdrop to the city conceal the valleys that themselves hide the rather ugly and forbidding villages crammed into them. I remembered from my first visit that what was odd about the interior of the Basque country was the way that traditional farming and quite large industrial plants and factories existed side by side. In these post-industrial days it looks even weirder. I drove up out of San Sebastián into a faint coating of snow along mountain roads, passing abandoned paper mills, gaunt iron skeletons that might have been created by the great Basque sculptor, Txillida. I had a very clear recollection of snow along mountain roads, passing abandoned paper mills, gaunt iron skeletons that might have been created by the great Basque sculptor, Txillida. I had a very clear recollection of snow along mountain roads, passing abandoned paper mills, gaunt iron skeletons that might have been created by the great Basque sculptor, Txillida.

Now, though, they are clean enough and fresh enough to star in any advert or grace any tourist brochure.

A pilgrim's slow progress

Rob Gaisford seeks salvation in a Spanish stroll

We stood still, eyeing one another warily and intensely, each waiting for the other to make the first move. The bull's horns gleamed, burrished bronze, under the declining Spanish sun. The only cape I had was made of waterproof plastic, folded in my rucksack. I was an unwilling, unprepared *torero* against one of nature's finest beasts. The same scene must have been enacted thousands of times over the centuries in this hot, unyielding land. The outcome could have been too horrible to contemplate had not a six-year-old boy appeared at that moment and ordered the animal

into a nearby barn for milking. I had come by sea from Plymouth to Santander and thence by train to León to walk for some of the way along the Camino de Santiago. After 30 kilometres, I had reached Hospital de Orbigo, where I found this test of my manhood blocking the route. Her name was Margarita.

This village is on the old pilgrim route from the Pyrenees to Santiago de Compostela. Santiago, or St James, was not a great success at converting Spain, but the discovery of his body, several hundred years after his death, caused Santiago de Compostela to become an important centre of pilgrimage from all

over Europe. Mine was intended to be a short walking holiday, not a pilgrimage, but I found myself drawn increasingly to the notion of reaching Santiago, and hurried calculations established that I could just do it if I walked 30km a day. Pilgrims have a certain status in that part of Spain – passing motorists beep horns in recognition and small children shout "¡Ole, peregrino!" My original, hedonistic motivation became a more ascetic determination to complete the journey.

I awoke early the next morning in my simple inn at Hospital de Orbigo, dislodged a dozy insect from my eye socket and let myself out. I made my way over the longest pilgrim bridge on the route. The sun was just rising behind me, lighting up the distant, misty hills and getting a welcome from crowing cocks and howling dogs. A church clock struck eight, twice.

A Spaniard, José, then a Frenchman, Jean-Louis, overtook me, walking briskly in contrast to my uneasy progress – the result of the previous day's exertions. "Thirty kilometres on the first day is too much," observed the latter.

At Astorga, I bought a double-length walking-stick adorned with the inevitable cockleshell and a large, hollow representation of a medieval water-bottle. After Astorga, the flat plain known as La Maragateria gives way to hillier country. There are long distances between villages.

After 30km, I reached Rabanal de Camino, where I was given a solicitous welcome at a hostel, and greeted with astonishment by José and Jean-Louis, who had overtaken me so long ago. There is a rigid grading system in Spanish hotels. The best are probably the comfortable, state-run *paradores*; the humblest



Cross purposes: a pilgrim reaches the end of her journey to Santiago de Compostela

PHOTOGRAPH: BRIAN HARRIS

are the simple *fondas*. A hostel is slightly more expensive and better furnished than a *fonda*. In this one, my room included half a bath. By walking up the wall above the taps, I could get most of my torso submerged. Bliss.

I took my stiff and painful leave just before dawn to start the ascent into the mountains to the west. Some 350 metres higher and 6km further on, my bruised and swollen feet led me past the deserted village of Foncedadán. I remembered that there was said to be an iron cross near here. Traditionally, pilgrims add a stone to the pile at its foot. Dutifully, I tossed a pebble on to what seemed a modest mound and passed on. A little further on, I was confronted by a giant pyramid of stones, spilling out on to the road. I hunted for another pebble, but earlier travellers had entirely denuded the ground of loose stones. I settled for replacing a dislodged rock.

The wind was howling over these hills and rain threatened as I reached the village of Marjaín. It is uninhabited save for Tomas, who, with his wife, runs a small refuge for pilgrims. He had seen me approaching and, as I turned off the road, he appeared at his door and rang a clattery old bell, shouting "¡Bienvenido, peregrino!" with such enthusiasm that further introductions were

unnecessary. I accepted a coffee, which was a lukewarm liquid in a chipped tin mug. It was disgusting. Jean-Louis and José had already been there an hour and decided to set off again, leaving me to inspect some of the religious artefacts that decorated, and probably insulated, the walls. I went on my way and found, to my astonishment, that I was able to walk faster and more

easily. After 20 minutes, I passed the others, explaining that I dared not stop and asking what they thought Tomas put in his coffee.

This burst of energy lasted several hours and saw me down the road that runs through the village of El Acebo to within sight of Molinaseca, where I found a room at Hostal El Palacio, beside the Romanesque bridge over the river Meruelo.

An early night, and then off again at eight the next morning, this time at a snail's pace as I tried to force my unhappy feet into service. After a couple of hours, their objections lessened and I picked up speed. I stopped only for coffee in Foncedadán and then hastened on again. Flatter now, the road took me to the ancient village of Locabulos. I paused for a beer in an indifferent bar, where elderly men were playing a noisy game of cards, and then attacked the last section of the day's march, to Villafraña. By the time I got there, my blistered feet had all but beaten my pilgrim will. Then I rounded a corner and stopped in my tracks. The declining sun reflected from a gleaming tiled roof. On one side of the road stood a welcoming, only partly occupied *parador*; on the other, one of nature's weirdest beasts. I gave in immediately.

FLIGHTSAVERS

RETURN PRICES FROM

Alicante	£99	Moscow	£249
Amsterdam	£99	New York	£169
Boston	£149	Paris	£71
Malaga	£99	Tenerife	£99

SOUTH AFRICA - END OF SEASON SPECIALS
 Capetown £349 • Durban £399 • Johannesburg £339

BRITISH AIRWAYS 2-4-1 VOUCHERS ACCEPTED HERE
 (Prices include International Departure Taxes - all prices subject to availability)
 For all your Flight Requirements plus
 • Car Hire • Airport Hotels • Airport Parking • Insurance
CALL: 0990 014 101
 LINES OPEN: MON-FRI 8.30-7.00 SATURDAY 8.30-5.30 SUNDAY 10.00-4.00

Co-op Travel DIRECT

RETAIL AGENTS FOR AUTO. HOLIDAYS
 NO CREDIT CARD PURCHASES

The Sun and the Father

Namibia is Africa's last unspoiled wilderness. A starkly beautiful land of open plains and vast desert blue skies. Namibia has the only country in the world where magnificent rhinos, the unique and rare desert elephant, and herds of forest desert kudu roam freely.

There are many ways to explore Namibia. And what more exhilarating than to take in her unique mix of green, the ever-pink granite plains and many wonders of the Namib, then by Namib flight over the world's oldest desert.

Namibia
 Africa's Greatest Natural Canvas
 For more information call 0171 636 2924/2928

Namibia Tourism & Culture, London W1P 0LQ Fax 0171 636 2968

هكذا من الأصل

Are we nearly there?

Prison museums for children: jails they won't want to escape from

Clink Prison Museum, 1 Clink Street, Bankside, London SE1 (0171-403 6515) The grim history of the original Clink Prison and the Bankside brothels is suitably moody entertainment for a rainy afternoon. See scenes of inmates catching rats and manacled prisoners begging for food, each with a bill and chain trailing behind them. Exhibits include old torture chains and thumb screws. Open seven days a week. 10am-6pm. Prices: adults £3.50, concessions and children £2.50, family £8.

The Galleries of Justice, Shire Hall, High Pavement, Lace Market, Nottingham (0115 952 0555) Prison wardens and court ushers played by costumed interpreters guide visitors around the exhibition. Includes a reconstruction of the trial of George Jackson, who in 1832 was accused of burning down a local salt mill during the Reform Act riots. Open Tues-Sun. 10am-5.30pm (last admission 4pm). Prices: adults £4.25, cones and children £2.95, family ticket £11.95, children under five, free.

Dover Old Town Gaol, Biggin Street, Dover, Kent (01304 242766) Dover's fully restored prison houses a suitably grim collection of inmates whose crimes include smuggling, murder and, in the case of several small boys, rabbit theft. The "horror and the tragedy" the museum promises come via hi-tech talking heads and animation. Visitors can also witness a trial in the imposing Victorian courtroom, wander through the exercise yard and squeeze into a cell. Guided tours run hourly throughout the day. Open Wed-Sat, 10am-4.30pm, Sun 2pm-4.30pm. Prices: adults £3.20, cones and children £1.90, children under five, free.

Micklegate Bar Museum, Micklegate, York (01904 634436) Royal visitors to York traditionally arrived via Micklegate Bar, and it was customary to decorate its entrance with the heads of recently hanged traitors. The gatehouse is now home to an exhibition charting 800 years of York's history; displays include about 40 heads in various states of decay. Open Sat-Sun, 9am-6pm; from Easter until the end of October it will be open seven days a week 9am-6pm. Prices: adults £1.50, students and OAPs £1, under-16s accompanied by an adult 50p.

Cirencester Lock-up, Trinity Road, Cirencester, Key from the Corinium Museum, Park Street, Cirencester (01285 655611) Known locally as "the dumping house" because of its domed roof, the Lock-up is a tiny prison with two cells and only one window grille. It remains closed for much of the year: most visitors choose to peer in through the bars. Open by arrangement with the Corinium Museum (opens at the end of March - call first); November-March, Tues-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2pm-5pm; April-October, Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2pm-5pm. Prices: adults £1.60, cones £1.40, students £1, children 80p, family ticket £4.

Charlotte Packer

Porridge mixed with politics

The Kilmainham Jail in Dublin sheds light on a dark age. By Alan Murdoch



PHOTOGRAPH: TONY BUCKINGHAM

Block booking: the Kilmainham Jail Museum

Dublin's Kilmainham Jail Museum brings a searing reality to the lives of its sometimes anonymous, sometimes famous inmates. It was, after all, the place where a *Who's Who* of Irish nationalist leaders, from Robert Emmet to Parnell to de Valera, heard the thud of metal doors clanging behind them.

In the past year, the once gloomy prison museum's permanent exhibition has been brought to life with theatrical flair and £1m of public funds to explain how famine, civil disorder and war came to land so many inside. Its balance of dignified treatment of the tragedy of Irish leaders' executions here and the opportunities to engage younger visitors through video-age techniques has recently been recognised with a Large Museum of the Year award from the Gulbenkian Foundation.

Kilmainham was the world's first jail used exclusively for political prisoners, yet its grey stone passages also provide the ideal cautionary trip back into stern Victorian times for harassed parents of adolescents.

The early prison "reformers" Jeremy Bentham and John Howard, zealots for extracting repentance and for the "fabrication of virtue", saw their vision given full rein here. They favoured harsh, hygienic and "fair" punishment as an alternative to the squalor of 18th-century prisons, in which more prisoners were killed by disease than by the ever-busy gallows.

In the new display, "humane" refinements of hanging - largely through the longer-drop, quicker-farewell technique developed by Professor Samuel Haughton of Trinity College, Dublin - are explained in neck-tightening detail.

Young people are encouraged to take part in the age-old debate about hanging by casting a vote in a computer poll: they can then see, in graphic form on screen, the latest balance of visitors' opinions for and against, presented by age group in graphic form on screen.

In 1796 Kilmainham was rearranged on the principles of one prisoner, one cell - and soon became overcrowded. Convict

numbers soared during the famine in the late 1840s when the starving were imprisoned in their thousands for possession of stolen bread-and-butter, and theft of apples or even turnips. The prison's grim regime is clearly illustrated by the authorities' attitude towards rats. On discovering that prisoners got four ounces of bread more than workhouse inmates, an enraged inspector, Phillip Priestly, demanded: "this alarming gap must be closed".

Even the mildest Victorian punishment aimed to exert maximum control over the inmate - and to ensure that the prisoner knew it. One exhibit is a cell-door eye-slot, revealing a miniature video of a confined woman's unnerving reaction to the warder's watching eye. And in an adjacent closed-circuit television room, visitors become warder-monitors of the jail and, eerily, of themselves.

As for political prisoners, after 1798, French-influenced United Irishmen were held here, as was Robert Emmet before his 1803 public execution; in 1848 Young Ireland rebels followed; then, in 1867, Fenians were incarcerated, betrayed by informers. After this, criminals were moved out, turning Kilmainham into a jail exclusively for political detainees.

In 1881, these included the nationalist leader Charles Stewart Parnell and his Land Leaguers, who defended Irish tenant farmers from evictions and rejected Westminster's Land Acts.

His release followed the 1882 Kilmainham Treaty, securing Parnell's co-operation with the British Prime Minister William Gladstone's Liberal government.

Kilmainham's climactic moment came in the 20th century, when 14 Easter Rising leaders were shot here between 3 and 12 May 1916. In a darkened passageway their family photographs, letters, pens and spectacles are laid out in individual spotlight alcoves, like shrines to the executed.

While the curator, Pat Cooke, acknowledges the value of a recent reassessment of 1916 by Irish historians, the museum avoids a didactic narrative. "We present the nationalist 'physical force' tradition

in its own terms and allow people to react in their own way," he says.

This means admitting to the complex, mixed backgrounds of the 1916 leaders. Some even had English parentage, a fact that contradicts the nationalist stereotype. Paradoxes continued when the jail changed hands.

British withdrawal left the prison controlled by pro-Treaty forces under Michael Collins, who appointed an IRA friend as governor over former comrades during the bloody 1922-1924 civil war. By November 1922, after Collins's death, Free State (pro-Treaty) forces were holding their own executions here.

Between April and September 1923, 300 anti-Treaty hardliners of the IRA women's division were imprisoned in Kilmainham and nearby Grangegorman (the main setting for Neil Jordan's film *Michael Collins*).

In time-honoured tradition, the women began tunnelling their way out, using metal spoons, but had got only a few feet before being discovered. After the women's release, Eamon de Valera, Sinn Féin leader (and opponent of Michael Collins during the civil war), later Taoiseach and President, became Kilmainham's final prisoner. He lived to see the building renovated by admiring volunteers in the Sixties. Today its dramatic associations continue. Key scenes from *In the Name of the Father*, featuring Daniel Day-Lewis as Gerry Conlon of the Guildford Four, were filmed here in 1993.

The Kilmainham Jail Museum, Dublin (00353 1 4535984), is at the junction of Inchicore Road and the South Circular Road, Dublin 8 (opposite the Irish Museum of Modern Art at Royal Hospital, Kilmainham).

Opening times: Monday to Friday 9.30am-5pm (last tour 75 minutes before closing). Guided tours only. Saturdays: closed in winter. Open Saturdays from 3 May: Sundays 10am-6pm (last tour 4.45pm).

Admission: adults £2, senior citizens £1.50, children or students £1, family £5.

Bus routes: Nos 51, 51B, 78A, 79 from city centre.

travel • overseas

Exotic Holidays

Exotic Holidays

First Choice Tropical

PRICES FROM
£399

Package	Destination	Accommodation	Adults	Children	Dates
£399	Mexico	Hac. Buenaventura	Man	14	2+RO 9 Apr
£559	Dominican Rep.	Club Marapica	Man	14	2+AI 31 Mar
£659	Margarita	Portofino	Cat/Man	14	3+AI 29 Apr
£699	Thailand	Asia Pattaya	Cat/Man	14	3+RO 18 Mar
£699	Mexico	Las Palmas	Cat	14	2+AI 1 Apr
£699	Mexico	Las Palmas	Man	14	2+AI 9 Apr
£719	Mexico	Blue Bay Club	Cat/Man	12	3+AI 24 Apr
£749	Dominican Rep.	Metro	Man	20	3+AI 22 Apr
£799	Mexico	Aristos	Cat/Man	19	2+AI 17 Apr
£899	Jamaica	Casablanca	Cat	14	3+AI 21, 28 Apr

AI = All inclusive; RO = Room only.

CALL OUR HOTLINE ON:
0161 742 2228

QUOTE REF: MS
OR CALL YOUR LOCAL
ABTA TRAVEL AGENT
FOR MORE OFFERS SEE
Telatext PAGES 266 & 271

LINES OPEN:
Sunday 10am-6pm,
Mon-Fri 8am-8pm,
Saturday 9am-5.30pm.
All holidays and prices are subject to availability.

First Choice

Hotel prices are per person in a two-bedded room.
Prices subject to taking insurance, typical charge £45. A booking fee of £5 will apply.
First Choice Holidays & Flights Ltd. ATOL 230 ABTA V1549

RUSSIA BY RIVER

A 10 OR 11 NIGHT JOURNEY BY RIVER, LAKE AND CANAL
LINKING ST PETERSBURG AND MOSCOW ABOARD THE LEV TOLSTOY



MS LEV TOLSTOY

Commissioned by Leonid Brezhnev and built in Austria for the use of the Communist Party elite and visiting dignitaries, the Lev Tolstoy is a 380ft long, first class vessel accommodating 180 passengers. All cabins have outside views and private shower and toilet. She has been excellently maintained and facilities include lounge, two bars, sauna, spacious deck area, beauty salon, clinic and gift shop. A unique feature is the indoor swimming pool.

The Lev Tolstoy is under long term charter to an American company and the vessel is managed by experienced American and European managers.

THE ITINERARY

DAY 1 London (Heathrow) - St Petersburg by scheduled flight. Embark Lev Tolstoy. Late afternoon city drive, seeing some of the city's most beautiful buildings, including St Isaac's Cathedral. Moor overnight.

DAY 2 St Petersburg Visit to the Hermitage, founded by Catherine the Great to see some of the world famous collection of European art. After lunch drive to Pushkin (Tsarskoye Selo) the impressive blue and gold palace by Rasstrai and Cameron.

DAY 3 St Petersburg Morning free. Afternoon sailing.

DAY 4 Riga Today we sail across Lake Onega, making a stop at the beautiful island of Kizhi. Visit the imposing 22 domed Church of the Transfiguration, a marvel of 18th century Russian wooden architecture.

DAY 5 Irtva Here in the heart of the Russian countryside you will be able to experience the special tranquility which has inspired writers and artists over the centuries. There will be an opportunity to walk in the woods, see the tiny village of Irtva and weather permitting, enjoy a barbecue picnic.

DAY 6 Yaroslavl We have the day to explore Yaroslavl, the oldest city on the Volga with its lovely riverfront and fine collection of merchant churches. See the Churches of Elijah the Prophet and the Transfiguration Cathedral.

DAY 7 Kostroma One of the loveliest of the cities of the Golden Ring. The city retains its classical 18-19th century layout with wide streets and boulevards fanning out like the spokes of a wheel from a central square. Visit the Ipatievsky Monastery (now a museum) which was founded in the 14th century by the Zernov family; the forbears of our visit to the outdoor museum village of "Berengovka".

DAY 8 Uglich This historic Golden Ring city on the Volga has some fascinating sites within its fortress. See the cathedral, the Church of St Dmitry on the Blood and the Palace chamber.

DAY 9 Moscow Sail along the Moscow Canal arriving in Moscow at lunch time. Afternoon city drive including Red Square and the Byzantine splendour of St Basil's multi-coloured onion-domed cathedral.

DAY 10 Moscow Morning visit to the Kremlin including the fine collection of imperial regalia, arms and carriages in the Armoury Museum. Afternoon free.

DAY 11 Moscow-London (Heathrow) Disembark after breakfast. Sightseeing programme included until departure to London.

PRICES PER PERSON IN TWIN BEDDED CABIN	
Main deck	£1349
Upper deck	£1425
Single Main deck	£1695

Prices subject to surcharge. Ports subject to change. Flights from Manchester available with Lufthansa at a supplement of £29 per person. *These dates are for 11 night cruises (one night longer), which operate in the reverse direction from Moscow to St Petersburg and include an extra day in St Petersburg. Add £75 per person to the above price.

Price includes: Economy class air travel, 10 or 11 nights aboard the Lev Tolstoy on full board, shore excursions, entrance fees, port taxes, UK departure tax, local guides, Guest Lecturer, Tour Manager.

Not included: Travel insurance, Russian visa, airport tax, £6.50, tips to crew.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS
Please telephone 0171-409 0376
(7 days a week, during office hours)

NOBLE CALEDONIA LIMITED
11 CHARLES STREET, MAYFAIR, LONDON W1X 8LE
TELEPHONE 0171-409 0376, FACSIMILE 0171-409 0834
24 HOUR BROCHURE ANSWERPHONE 0171-353 1474
ATOL 308

1997 DEPARTURE DATES
12, 22, 27 June, 3, 13, 24 July, 3, 14, 24 August,
4 September

South African Affair
CAPE TOWN, WINELANDS, GARDEN ROUTE, NATAL, TRANSVAAL, ZIMBABWE
A unique selection of Classic Hotels, Game Reserves and Stunning Scenery & Gardens.
First class direct flights to Durban, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Harare.
South African Affair ATOL 2334
571 Humberston Road, London W6 6QH
0171-381 5222

CUBA
Worldwide HOLIDAYS DIRECT
Phone the Specialists
01202 743907
STUNNING CUBAN INTERCHANGE
Tel: 0181 881 3612 ATOL 2429

THE INDEPENDENT
Newspaper Publishing plc
regrets that although every reasonable precaution is taken, no responsibility can be accepted for flights and/or accommodation offered through these columns, or any loss arising therefrom. Readers are advised to take all necessary precautions before entering into any travel arrangements.

NEW ENGLAND
COUNTRY HOMES
A superb collection of coastal, lakeside & inland properties throughout New England.
FREE 132 PAGE BROCHURE CALL:
(0990) 143686 (24 Hrs)
Quote Ref. N386.
ATOL 261

Florida VACATIONS
An exclusive selection of the finest Villas & Apartments
CALL NOW FOR OUR BROCHURE
01727 841330
ATA V1514 ATOL 2729 2620

NEW ENGLAND Free advisory & booking service on Country Inns to Luxury Hts. 01923 851468 for free sampler. 100127 2706@com-pusaeva.com

NEW ENGLAND VACATIONS - distinctive Inns & family homes, non-stop flights to Boston. brochure Line: 01727 852211. Fully bonded. ATOL V1514 ATOL 2678

Far East
SUNVIL DISCOVERY, Fly-drives to Namibia, Zimbabwe & The Cape. Plus safari to Skeleton Coast, Swaziland & Zambia. Totally flexible. Highly flexible tours and holidays for individuals. 0181-647 4748 ATOL 1068.

SUNVIL DISCOVERY, Thailand, Vietnam. Highly flexible tours and holidays for individuals. 0181-647 4748 ATOL 1068.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
MARC HILLAPEN

Before heading back to the uncertainties of the present railway age, hunt through the twirling columns of the museum for Consort's Café – and a life-sustaining piece of sticky sponge as thick as a Roman wall. Unlike finding a train home, this is truly a piece of cake.

you ascend to Northernhay – and more than a millennium of history. The “hay” component of the name is a Saxon term for an enclosure of a tithing. Exeter has a handsome handful of these. Even in the dying days of February, each is flickering into life as the first spring flowers meekly emerge.

Northernhay is claimed to be the first public park in Britain, dedicated in 1612. But the term “park” does scant justice to the curvaceous, herbaceous expanse sculpted by Romans, Saxons and Normans.

Each wave of visitors has left its mark on the space – notably the

Romans, who in AD200 beefed up the wooden stockade that first protected Exeter with a formidable wall 30ft high and 10ft thick. They conjoined the fortification from frozen lava lying virtually beneath their feet, where millions of years ago the gentle terrain was shattered by a mild (this is Devon, after all) eruption. Now it runs like an errant contour through Northem-hay.

You see plenty of evidence of the grey, volcanic rock as you climb towards Athelstan's Tower. This turret was actually built by the Normans rather than the Saxon

monarch; they generously named it for the king who had reinforced the stone curtain after the Danes breached it around the end of the first millennium. Nowadays, the main purpose of the rough red sandstone tower is to draw the visitor to one of the highest points in the city, from where the sheer good fortune of Exeter becomes clear. In every direction, handsomely graded hills rise from the winter haze.

The Crown Court now occupies the castle grounds, rendering the enclosure out-of-bounds to law-abiding visitors. But the original

Norman gate is still in the public domain, and slams its way on to the skyline. The Norman arc above the entrance is topped by two triangle-tipped Saxon windows. Surely some structural mistake, since the Normans succeeded the Saxons? The answer seems to be that this was an early example of cowboy building.

"The Normans employed Saxon workmen to do the work," says Sara, one of the volunteer guides who usher visitors around Exeter in all weathers. "They probably finished it off in the style they were good at, while the Normans weren't looking."

On the scale of outrages perpetrated against Exeter, dodgy Saxons and their handiwork hardly registers. The main offender was the Luftwaffe, which visited gratuitous horror on the city as part of the so-called Baedeker raids in 1942. Having failed to wipe out military targets in Britain, the German bombers turned their sights on the country's heritage. Exeter was the softest of targets in the (guide) book.

The Fifties followed the Nazis with a salvo of demolition, as you discover when you try to follow the gentle curve of the wall. Parts survived the figurative Nazi jackboot.

FAX: 0171 293 2505

Scotland

SELF CATERING
Scotland
 "CONSULT THE EXPERTS"
 Over 3,000 self-catering
 properties in all areas
 from luxury houses to
 craft cottages.
 Write or phone
 for brochure

**1987
 20th
 ANNIVERSARY**

Madison
 30 Frederick St.
 Edinburgh EH2 2JR

**SCOTLAND'S WELCOME COT-
 TAGES** - Hot off the press now
 1987 book of over 1,000 cottages.
 Phone 0801 078 702215.

**Country Cottages
 in Scotland**
 EXCEPTIONAL holiday
 properties in the most
 beautiful areas of Scotland.
 FREE to PAGE 400/405
RING (0)990 851113
 QUOTE 9429 (24 hrs)



**COTTAGES AND HOUSES over 100
 in South Scotland. For full colour
 brochures call M J Thomson & Co
 (0855) 550400.**

SCOTLAND'S Sparkling Châteaux
 from over 250 cottages. 01282
 445292 (311167)

Suffolk

SOUTHWOLD Coast. Quality cottages,
 1987. Self catering. Brochure
 Suffolk. Tel: 01793 851201

ALDEBURGH FOR - EASTERN
 DORSET. 1987 book of over 1,000
 over 1000, to suit all tastes
 & . Same dates avail May to
 December. Phone 01464 750252

SEASIDE Châteaux. National Hotel
 Bath. "Tender" Manor.
 Wingham. 1987. 20th Anniversary
 0203 60 DEBS. 3rd of octance
 pay 125 only after arrival at travel
 agent. 1987. 20th Anniversary

Sussex

Wales

BRECON BEACONS/BLACK MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK
Over 100 set catering cottages, some sleep up to 10. Many less than £50 per week incl. concn.
01874 676446

SNOWDONIA COASTLINE, Llwyn paramoeddi, Coastal and country cottages and farmhouses, Nwyd Holidays 01758 720474

TENBY, Sandcastle & Penllynwiche, 400 historical and catering homes near beautiful beaches and countryside, Frank B. Meeson, Dept 18, Skliffon St, Tenby, 01306 02000 (Welsh)

N.WALES, 1,600 cottages, etc., Mamre, Snowdonia, Snowdonia Tourist, 01746 701702

GOWER, Amables, Snowdonia, 120 cottages, 100 houses, 120 from Home 01792 350624.

PENBROKESHIRE
A superb selection of quality character cottages in the Penbroekeshire Coast National Park. All properties furnished to the highest standards.
Prices start for five cottages below
01259-861397 ext. 16
SOUTH COAST 01546

HAIR-PRICE - Dimple houses, Gwynedd, Llynffyllt 17C barnhouses, Gwynedd, Gwynedd 01755 25, Llanfyllter 10C, AARAC 3" converted, "Wright" best, S&S, South Gwynedd 01546

SEY-ON-WYE Cottages, always a lovely outlook. Short walk to bookshops or long walks in hills. Between 01247 782625

SUPERS COTTAGES Wales, Ffronbri, Dafen, Llŷnau, Penryn, Sykes Cottages, Gwynedd 01425

565 COTTAGES/PENBROKESHIRE throughout Wales, All Tourist Star Graded, Wales Holidays - 01906 602627

WALES Specialists. Choose from over 410 cottages. 01259 245743 4.01160

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Yorkshire & The Dales</h2>	
<p>Holiday Cottages</p> <p>In the Yorkshire Dales, York, Coast, Moors, Peak & Lake District <i>Over 200 superb self-catering cottages available from our fully stocked holiday homes.</i></p> <p>(01756) 700872 Yorkshire Cottages Ltd. 100, High Street, Skipton 4 North Yorkshire, YO23 1PE</p>	<p>YORKSHIRE'S DALES MOORS AND COAST</p> <p>★ Self catering holiday properties in rural locations from Ribblesdale, Harrogate and the Great Wharfedale to the Coast ★</p> <p>★ Dales Holiday Centre ★</p> <p>01756 799883</p>

If you wish to advertise in this section please telephone the Travel Team on 0171 293 2222

هكذا من الأصل

Cornish cream

Candida Lloyd watches the world go by in Polruan – where cuteness comes with character

When, in 1478, the King sent his sergeant-at-arms to enforce the law among wilful members of the community at Fowey estuary in south-east Cornwall, the man was dispatched back to London minus his ears. Today you can expect a friendlier welcome, particularly at the charming village of Polruan that huddles on one side of the mouth of the Fowey estuary. The heart of the village is made up of a mass of stone cottages divided by a network of narrow streets. Yet despite the cute looks and the consequent summer hordes of visitors, this is still very much a place with its own character. You see it at its empty best at this time of year. An attractive harbour overlooks the estuary where a flotilla of boats is criss-crossed by container vessels laden with china clay. Opposite the village is the pretty town of Fowey, accessible by a 50p passenger ferry. Reaching Polruan by car is not easy. A tiny vehicle ferry operates from further up the estuary; otherwise you have to take part in a 40-minute cross-country rally through the narrow back lanes. But once you fight your way through, the stresses of working life evaporate; you can put on jeans and a big jumper, and flop. The two pubs in the village are subtly demarcated: one

‘The place seems like an updated version of Under Milk Wood’

has a wide range of food; the other a wide range of local characters. There are also a couple of general stores, tea shops, and a bakery offering pastries for 60p. The place seems like an updated Cornish version of *Under Milk Wood*.

A boat-building business still operates in the harbour, along with a scattering of fishermen. In Polruan's heyday vast quantities of pilchards were brought in to be salted and pressed in stacks up to 6ft high. The yards, known as “pilchard palaces”, where the stacking took place can still be seen, attached to houses along the waterfront. Another feature of the village is a 14th-century stone blockhouse, which was linked to a similar fort on the opposite side of the estuary by a heavy chain. To prevent pirates and enemy ships from entering the port the chain was simply yanked up.

But the best thing about Polruan is the water life. You can spend hours just looking out on the estuary, watching the river trade. Apart from gawping, walking is the other reason for visiting Polruan. Follow the coast east and you immediately step out on to some of the country's finest cliffs. Plunging into deep valleys or up into rocky outcrops, the walking can be tough going, but the views are always glorious. Inland, several beautiful paths trace the side of the estuary. The best known is the four-mile circular Hall Walk created by the Mohun family of Hall, who were the local bigwigs in 1585. The path was a kind of 16th-century Disneyland. Local serfs cut out the walkway, which zigzags down

the steep hillside to the river, and planted vast numbers of trees and shrubs for the benefit of promenading ladies and gentlemen.

The walk takes you through the centre of Fowey, which manages to keep the

number of shops selling sailing shoes and pasties down to a bearable level, and past the home of Daphne du Maurier, many of whose novels, including *Rebecca*, were inspired by the area.

But the most sensational

walk starts at the 16th-century bridge at the hamlet of Lerryn, several miles out of Polruan. A riverside track goes down to the ancient Ethy Quay, where sail harges used to bring their wares. The tide laps into Lerryn Creek twice a day, bring-



Bay watch: from Polruan, left, it's a 50p ferry to Fowey

PHOTOGRAPH: MARC HILL/APEX

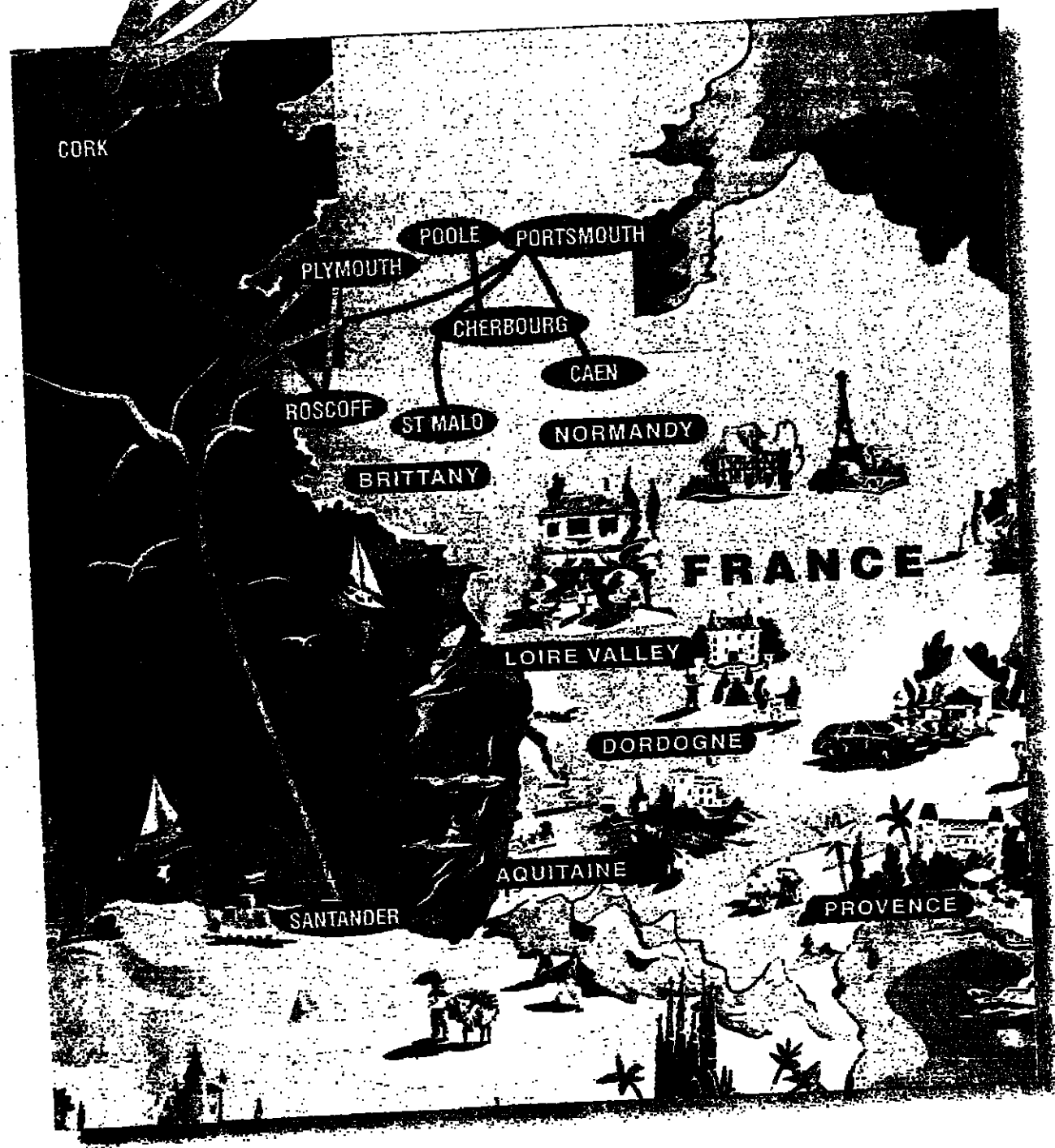
ing with it the scent of the sea. The five-mile circular walk twists and turns alongside the creek and through some woodland which was recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086. The path eventually turns inland at the old river quay at St Winnow.

At the hamlet is a church which contains a shrine to two men from St Winnow. From what must have been a simple rural lifestyle, the two local boys grew up to become Army officers and ended up fighting thousands of Zulu warriors in the battle of Rorke's Drift. After the church the track goes past a ruined mill and

ends up at an 18th-century manor house. Hikers should ensure that their return to Lerryn, across a set of stepping stones, coincides with the licensing hours. At the local pub you can enjoy a pint of good Cornish ale. Alternatively, you can buy mugs of tea and coffee from the village shop, and if it's warm enough, sit on the nearby green, and watch the birds.

Walks in the area: National Trust booklet, Coast of Cornwall series No 21, Fowey. Tourist office: The Ticket Shop (in the Post Office), 4 Custom House Hill, Fowey (01726 833616).

OUR FRANCE Direct



Travelling to Holiday France or Spain?
Why drive the long way round when you can sail direct?
We land you closer to where you'd like to be and save you wasted fuel and effort.
Our luxury cruise-ferries, with their superb value and award-winning service spoil you the moment you drive on board.
And our huge range of self-catering and self-drive holidays and breaks will spoil you for choice.

Brittany Ferries
The Holiday Fleet

BROCHURES 0990 143 537 (24HRS) RESERVATIONS 0990 360 360
OR SEE YOUR TRAVEL AGENT



West Country diary

Holiday bookings for Cornwall in 1999 will be directly influenced by an astronomical event in Asia later this month. The total solar eclipse over Mongolia on 10 March is bound to fuel interest in the next-but-one total eclipse of the sun, visible over west Cornwall at 11.11am on 11 August, 1999. The central line of totality passes just north of Penzance and south of Falmouth (see map, above). For an excellent guide to the eclipse, complete with a viewer, send a cheque for £5.95, payable to the Royal Greenwich Observatory, to The Observatory, Madingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0EZ. Accommodation is likely to be scarce. For lists of properties, call the tourist information centres in Penzance (01736 62207, also covering St Ives), Helston (01326 365431) and Falmouth (01326 312300). If you cannot make it to Cornwall, then you will still get a good view of a partial eclipse from elsewhere in the UK. Even in Britain's northernmost town, Lerwick in Shetland, there will be a partial eclipse covering 65 per cent of the sun.

Less cosmic events in Devon and Cornwall this year include the following (contact numbers for further details shown in brackets):
1 May: Padstow 'Obby 'Oss celebrations – May Day custom marking the coming of spring (01841 533449).
8 May: Helston Flora Day – the spring celebration moves west for the sequence of Furry Dances (01326 572062).
15-17 May: Devon County Show, Westpoint Showground, near Exeter (01392 444777).
23 May-7 June: English Riviera Dance Festival, Victoria Hotel Ballroom and other venues in Torquay (01895 632143).
6-22 June: Golowan Festival, Penzance (01736 331933).
3-20 July: Exeter Festival (01392 265200).
25 August: Newlyn Fish Festival (01736 62207).
22-25 August: Wadebridge Folk Festival, re-named this summer after 24 years as the Cornwall Folk Festival (01208 831123).
8-20 September: St Ives September Festival (01736 795003 or 01736 66077).
8 October: Tavistock Goose Fair (01822 613529).
6 November: Bridgwater Guy Fawkes Carnival (01278 429288).

Crying wolf in Scotland

Should we be reintroducing native species to Britain?
Daniel Butler considers schemes with teeth – and tusks

Popular opposition was an insuperable problem for Dr Roger Panaman's plans to open a wolf centre at Aviemore. He had planned eventually to release the animals into the wild. After a long-running battle with locals, on 10 February he reluctantly conceded defeat. "I still believe it is perfectly possible to reintroduce wolves anywhere in the Highlands," he protests. "There is no habitat problem, it is just a political one – no one is prepared to stand up to the landowners and farmers."

Enthusiasm for bringing back animals exterminated by our ancestors is increasing. Wild boar, beavers and wolves are prime candidates, and research has been taking place in Scotland. Boar and beaver were once heavily hunted for sport, food and fur, and had probably died out by Shakespeare's day. But, although the last English wolves disappeared around the same time, a handful survived for another two centuries in Scotland and Ireland. The theory is that wolves would keep nature in balance by culling the over-expanded Scottish deer herds, boar would help forestry by controlling undergrowth, and beavers would aid habitat regeneration.

Resistance to wolves has, understandably, been pretty widespread in Scotland. A survey by *The Scotsman* last year revealed that only 17 per cent of locals wanted wolves on their doorsteps and just 36 per cent of all Scots favoured the idea. "Just because the Highlands are sparsely populated doesn't mean this is accept-



Wolves – suitable for Scotland? PHOTOGRAPH: PLANET EARTH

able," says George Anderson of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). "This is not the same country as it was 40, let alone 200, years ago; people who think that an animal should be reintroduced just because it once lived here seem to forget that," he says. "When people talk about bringing back wolves we simply say, 'think about it'."

The prospect of howling wolves in Scotland, however,

may pale beside the possibility of contending with wild boar. These are powerful omnivores with snouts that act as a combined plough and battering ram. Just one boar can devastate an entire field of crops. "They go through root crops like a Rotavator and can cause untold damage in vineyards and market gardens," says an adviser for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF).

Other habits include bulldozing through fences, damaging watercourses by wallowing, and destroying the woodland understorey. Then there's the risk of road accidents. "Imagine hitting a 300-pound boar at 60 miles an hour," he says.

Boar are comparatively common across Europe and are generally tolerated, yet Tony Mitchell-Jones, a mammal ecologist at English Nature, points out that Continental attitudes are heavily influenced by the powerful hunting lobby which prizes boar as a big-game animal. In Britain, as eating habits have become more adventurous, the number of boar farms across the country has risen to about 50. The creatures are notorious escapologists and most farms have had more break-outs than a wet weekend at Colditz. Although the majority of boars are quickly recaptured or killed, some are thriving. "There are reports of breeding in Kent and possibly North Yorkshire," says Mr Mitchell-Jones. "We can't confirm these, but it's definitely possible."

Scientists say that accidental reintroduction would be a disaster. "Many farmed wild boar contain domestic pig genes," says a MAFF adviser. If these get out into the wild you end up with a bastardised ferret pig – the worst of all possible worlds."

So if wolves and boars aren't acceptable, what about beavers? The outlook for this toothy creature is different – and there is a serious prospect of an officially backed reintroduction scheme. The preliminary research has provided promising

results. "Most people think of dams when they picture beavers, but that's the Canadian species. European beavers prefer tunnelling in the river bank," says Mairi Cooper, a vertebrate ecologist at SNH.

Tree-felling, another habit associated with the animal, also appears to be less of a problem than might be imagined. Generally, beavers feed on herbaceous vegetation, and bark damage is confined to a narrow strip of land close to the water (some studies even suggest this may have a beneficial coppicing effect). Better still, so far the idea seems popular. Polls suggest that two-thirds of Scots favour the idea, and there are few objections from farmers or foresters. The only slight hiccup has come from fishermen, worried that beaver activity might flood salmon spawning beds or block migrating fish. Research suggests that this is unlikely, however, and, as a next step, the scientists have tentatively pinpointed Norwegian beavers as those most closely related to their extinct Scottish cousins. Further work needs to be done on possible pilot sites, but Ms Cooper says if all goes well the new millennium could see beavers swimming in Britain for the first time in four centuries.

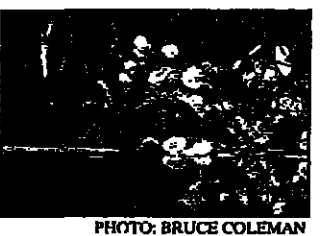


PHOTO: BRUCE COLEMAN

Drought warnings from the water companies were all we needed for the heavens to open. In the last few days we have been nearly drowned by horizontally-driven rain: fields are awash, our little river is in spate, and springs are erupting in places that have been dry for years.

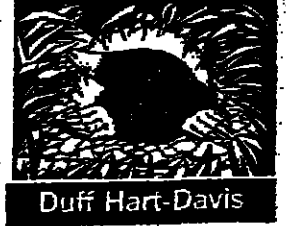
The amount of water coming down has been colossal. One inch of rain dumps 22,000 gallons on every acre, and I reckon we have had 4in during the week: our smallholding of 12 acres must therefore have been bombarded by nearly 10 million pounds of water. Yet only a tiny fraction of this life-giving flood will be caught or used by man: most has already filtered away via land-drains and ditches into the river, and on down the Severn to the sea.

With the air full of talk about drought and global warming, it is easy to become obsessed about water. Walking up our modest stream, I try to estimate the flow. How long would it take to fill a 100-gallon bath? At its present rate, only a few seconds. This minor watercourse is channelling away hundreds of thousands of gallons every day, and it is only one of hundreds fuelling the big river.

I find it strange that our local water company, Severn Trent, which was obliged to impose a long-running hosepipe ban in the summer of 1995, is apparently doing so little to increase storage capacity. A spokeswoman assured me blandly that its system of reservoirs, rivers and subterranean aquifers is functioning well, but that no research is being done into the possibility of shunting water from the wet west to the dry east via some form of national grid.

Other bodies such as the Environment Agency and British Waterways have considered some such scheme, perhaps using canals, for annual rainfall in the west (more than 100in in Snowdonia) is four times that in the east (22in in Cambridge); but the idea is not as simple as it sounds. One difficulty is that the acid upland water of the Severn, derived largely from the Welsh mountains, is quite different from water flowing out of chalk and limestone, and would play havoc with the ecosystem if discharged straight into the Thames.

The most promising idea is the artificial recharging of aquifers, already pioneered with success by Thames Water. Hundreds of feet under London, beneath thick bands of clay, silt and sand, an immense mass of chalk extends 50 miles to north and south. The chalk, riven by horizontal



Duff Hart-Davis

The air is full of talk about drought and global warming, yet only a fraction of our rainfall is stored

fractures, is in effect a colossal sponge, full of water which has filtered down through the overlying strata.

For years, Thames Water has been abstracting through boreholes, but now it has begun doing the opposite: in times of plenty, such as fill-dike February, it is pouring treated water back down, to replenish an underground reservoir infinitely larger than any on the surface in Britain.

I find the idea of the aquifers agreeably mysterious. Is it not extraordinary that prehistoric seawater, still saline, should be lying beneath Abingdon?

Another simple and effective means of conserving water has been proposed by Mark Hatfield, a hydraulic engineer and demolition expert based in Oxfordshire. Every house, he says, should have its own underground tank for collecting rainwater off the roof: indeed, such a tank should be a legal requirement for any new dwelling.

A pump would lift soft water to a header tank in the attic, to be used for flushing lavatories. This single innovation would cut mains consumption sharply; it would also provide a supply for hosing down cars, watering gardens and washing hair.

The farm on which I grew up in the Chilterns once depended entirely on the rainwater it could collect and store. High on the chalky hills, no ground supply was available, so five subterranean cisterns caught the runoff from the roofs of the house and its surrounding barns.

As in many crises brought on by the extravagance of modern living, there is something to be said for a return to systems that functioned perfectly well in the past.

TEL: 0171 293 2222

classified • personal

FAX: 0171 293 2505

Independent Hearts

Replies should be addressed to the relevant box number,
c/o The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL

zygosis the bringing together...

THE PROFESSIONAL PERSON'S INTRODUCTION AGENCY

Proven world-wide success rates. Meet your ideal partner in our secure, safe environment. We are happy to discuss your requirements and provide a personal service. We look forward to your call.

LONDON: 0171 293 9979
SCOTLAND: 011 596 3495
YORKSHIRE: 0113 235 5787

NORTH WEST: 01625 583000
MIDLANDS: 0990 143078
SOUTH WEST: 01223 858514

NORTH EAST: 0191 241 2254
SOUTH EAST: 01632 691220

Sara Eden
PERSONAL INTRODUCTIONS

"A stunning success rate... Countless long-term relationships" MAIL ON SUNDAY

Winchester: 01753 830350 London: 0171 499 9626

Eden House - 28 Thames Street - Winchester - SO1 4PR

SIRIUS

Who joins an introduction agency?

Read about the latest 2000 members in our free quarterly magazine

Call Free 0800 072 3075

Office hours: 9.30am - 12.30pm, 7 days a week

talk to george

call 0891 56 55 55

GAY

0891 226 800

SPECIAL INTERESTS

MORE GUYS ON LINE EVERY DAY

CRASH CHARGED - 24 HOUR HOTLINE - 0800 072 3075

DARE TO CONNECT?

- Explosive and enjoy the company of interesting, unpretentious "real" single people, make new friends and develop honest, sincere relationships
- People with integrity, humour, sense of fun and adventure, and a keenness to enjoy life to the full - now!

GOD CONNECTIONS

01865 511774

- Personal introductions and social events from a highly experienced and respected company specialising in working closely with equality
- Working with equality
- BUCKS BONG BATH
- WILKS NORTHANTS WALKS

People usually only meet within the confines of their social circle. **DateLine** is the ideal way to expand your horizons

FOR FULL DETAILS WITH NO OBLIGATION WRITE: T/23 ARNOLD RD LONDON W6 6AL OR CALL (01869) 324 100

Fax 1900 481 410 website: <http://www.dataline.co.uk>

TRYST

TRYST IS A NATIONWIDE INTRODUCTION SERVICE ESTABLISHED FOR OVER 10 YEARS. FOR SUCCESSFUL, INTELLIGENT AND SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE SINGLE PEOPLE.

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A TRULY PERSONAL SERVICE WITH SOME OLD FASHIONED VALUES AND INTEGRITY AND FEELS THAT ARE WITHIN REACH?

TEL: HELIX SPAIN, 01585 708554 ANYTIME, ANYDAY

Your enquiry will be treated with personal confidentiality

Across The Room

HERTS • ESSEX • SUFFOLK

Call Eleanor for a friendly chat & free brochure 01277 352742

GUSTO

The dining club for gay men

0171 336 6507

PERSONAL

CHARITIES

Claire is suffering from breast cancer

Claire looks perfectly healthy. But she's suffering terribly because last year, breast cancer left her without a mother.

Her story isn't so unusual. Breast cancer is the single most common cause of death in women aged between 35 and 54 in the UK. All the women who die every week in Britain, it also hurts countless families - just like Claire's.

Please, please help us to target the cure by funding the vital research every week in Britain. It also hurts countless families - just like Claire's.

Please help with a credit card donation by calling 0771 404 3955

The Breast Cancer Campaign 111 High Holborn, London WC1V 6LS. Registered Charity No. 260808

INDEPENDENT HEARTS

The Independent Way to Meet New People

By placing an advertisement in the The Independent Hearts section of *The Independent* and the *Independent on Sunday* you will immediately be in contact with over 1.66 million readers.

The cost for your advertisement, published in the first available editions of the Saturday "Weekend" and Sunday "Real Life" sections is just £5.00 per line including V.A.T. (Box No is an additional £10.00, please cross here if you do not require a Box No.)

Simply write your advertisement in the spaces below and fill in the coupon - Minimum 2 lines. (N.B. A character is a letter, a number, a punctuation mark and a space between words)

Name: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____
Telephone (daytime): _____
Signature: _____

All advertisements must be prepaid. Cheques should be made payable to Newspaper Publishing Plc or debit m/c.

☐ Access ☐ Visa ☐ Amex ☐ Diners Club ☐ Card expiry date: _____ Card No: _____

Send all advertisements to: Independent Hearts, The Independent, 19th Floor, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Telephone: 0171 293 2347 • Fax: 0171 293 2505

This offer is only open to private advertisers. Trade enquiries are welcome on the above telephone number. *NRS Jan - June '95

هكذا من الأصل

Tales

Dirty weekends? I'd rather stay at home

Lyndsay Calder

FAX: 0171 293 2505



Unusual Gifts

**GENUINE
BIRTHDAY
NEWSPAPERS**

From largest archives saved from
1642-1996. Sunday Newspapers
from 1915. Ready for presentation.
Same day dispatch.

REMEMBER WHEN

520 Purley Way, IS
Croydon CR0 4RE

0181 688 6323
or call FREE 0500 520 000

**RADIO
CONTROLLED
WATCHES &
CLOCKS**

Phenomenally accurate
**QUINTZELANS &
KUNDO-STAIGER**
timepieces available by
Mail Order.

Free Catalogue:
**CORNELL CLOCKS &
WATCHES**
FREEPOST LS6441M
LEEDS LS8 5YD

هكذا من الأصل

Tales of men's shirts

Don't pay the most for the best.
By Andy Zheimer

It is safe to say that London is internationally acknowledged to be the world's premier shirt capital. With one or two exceptions, such as Charvet in Paris, all the great shirtmakers are based here and it is to the British capital that connoisseurs flock to purchase the ultimate status symbol in shirts. For high on 100 years, Jermyn Street, SW1 – and its environs – has been the place for bespoke and off-the-peg shirt tailoring, and it will probably remain so until shirts go out of fashion.

Yet the fact remains that whilst anybody in their right mind would enjoy the pure luxury factor of a shirt fit for a king, not everybody can afford to make a regular trip to SW1. And that's why man in his infinite wisdom created the high street. Certainly, the true shirt scenario would not be complete without a mention of the increasingly competitive standards to be found there too.

Marks & Spencer, for instance, sells its comprehensive range of traditional City shirts at £32.50. If you're looking for a comfortable shirt that's fabulous value for money and practically a classic, you need look no farther. They come with double cuffs and you can opt for stripes, checks or solids in 100 per cent cotton. Alternatively, the M&S superfine range of men's shirts retails at £27 and is available with either single or double cuffs, with classic or cut-away collar. One interesting feature of this shirt is its differentiated tail length – the back being longer than the front. The senior selector for men's shirts, Gary Thorne, reports that "this season is all about colour." The shelves certainly make a visual feast, with emerald green, azure blue and red catching the eye.

C&A's latest shirt offering is in non-iron technology. The top 33 stores will be stocking these quality superfine cottons from European fabric mills in both solid and yarn-dyed patterns from March, retailing at £20 each. There are three other shirt ranges from C&A at £5, £12 and £17 each, the price depending mainly on the fabrics employed. These offer highly functional shirts, which handle cleanly and crisply and are eminently wearable for business or formal occasions.

However, if money is no object, and should you be looking to invest in a garment of the very finest quality, painstakingly constructed to last and made to measure to fit that unique shape that is you, there is really only a limited number of "off high street" establishments to visit.

Peter Wilshire has been with New & Lingwood of SW1 for some 20 years. "We have a shop at 'the school'," he says – Bton, that is – "which sells everything for the boys, including stockings. The old boys come here when they leave."

The New & Lingwood bespoke twofold cotton poplin shirt will set you back £125, but is truly a hand-crafted work of art. (Off-the-peg shirts retail for between £75 and £79, accounting for roughly 75 per cent of sales). The term "twofold" means that two yards are twisted together, lending additional strength and elasticity without adding bulk. There is a minimum order of four hand-cut shirts, which is common practice. Dukes and earls can have coronets hand-embroidered for a noble £30.

There are pattern books that contain around 1,000 designs, with many classic stripes and checks, fabrics that include sumptuous Sea Island cotton quality, costly crepe silk (you can pay up to £260), collars of every conceivable shape and a surprising range of colours. The current trend, Mr Wilshire informs me merrily, is for very conservative bengals and fine bengals (stripes), but for the spring somewhat "fancier" stripes will be on offer, and customers should look out for the brighter solids.

Twice a year, in March and October, the gentlemen of New & Lingwood head west to measure and fit small, medium, large and sometimes huge clients in New York, Washington and Boston. The shirts arrive a little later by courier, in return for a princely sum.

Hilditch and Key was established in London in 1899, with a branch in the rue de Rivoli, Paris, opening in 1925. With its own factory in Glenrothes, north of Edinburgh, Hilditch and Key received a Queen's Award for Export Achievement in 1993.

The list of "key customers" makes for interesting reading: it includes the Dukes of Marlborough and Kent, Romie Corbett, Jeremy Paxman and Mel Brooks, as well as a number of the crowned heads of Europe and a liberal smattering of government ministers. It is well known that all the shirts worn by Karl Lagerfeld and Chanel models on the catwalks are from Hilditch and Key.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the price of bespoke twofold cotton poplin shirts starts at £125, and there is a minimum order of six. However, the superb off-the-peg range is more affordable, with plains at £59.95 each, basic stripes at £65 and the more exclusive fabrics weighing in at £69.95 per shirt.

"Our shirts are simply the best money can buy," says the chairman, Michael Booth. His tip for spring/summer is for plains in strong colours, with lilac as the leading contender.

Harvie & Hudson, at 77 Jermyn Street, prefers not to reveal its client list. There's little choice between them all, but perhaps this is the most conservative shirt shop of all. The business is run by the sons and grandsons of the original T.G. Harvie and G.F. Hudson.

"There is a feeling at present for bright solids," states J.W. Harvie. Prices of made-to-measure shirts begin at £115 for single cuffs and £145 for double, with off-the-peg shirts costing £60 and some of the finest silks priced at £95. There are seven basic collar types but, should these not suffice, no shape is too much of a challenge.

Harvie & Hudson, surprisingly, run a flourishing mail order business. Simon Hobbs, a salesman at Turnbull & Asser (by appointment to the Prince of Wales), informs me that clients sometimes request "the most amazing and embarrassing shirts". He will not be cajoled into revealing any examples, but

does mention that the Israeli PM will be dropping in shortly and that Gary Oldman is a regular. Here you must buy six bespoke shirts at £100 each to open an account, with the most expensive priced at £155. There is a range of 10 collar shapes, and fabrics available include Oxford, Zephyr, Turboline, Voile, Sea Island cotton quality and, perhaps the Rolls-Royce of them all, Zendefine. A Turnbull & Asser shirt is certainly not a fashion item – it all began in 1885, you see. They tend to be extremely practical garments.

The final bespoke tailor to look out for is Oswald Boateng, 9 Vigo Street, W1; but compared to the others he is from another planet, being positively funky. He says that "spring/summer '97 is the time for a bit of adventure. The theme of the collection is *Mission Impossible* and my favourite look for the season is a subtle and my favourite look for the season is a subtly tailored suit with a shirt and tie, all in sharply tailored suit with a shirt and tie, all in silver." What would the original Mr Harvie have made of all that? Boateng bespoke shirts

start at £135 (minimum order, three), with off-the-peg costing not much less.

However, if you're just starting out in life, and need to look the part without spending quite as much cash, fear not. There are plenty of high quality and affordable off-the-peg shirts out there that won't get you hot under the collar. The two key labels of repute to check out are Thomas Pink and T.M. Lewin, both of which are favoured by City whizz-kids.

Thomas Pink, owned by the Mullen brothers and possibly to be floated on the London Stock Exchange for some £15m, currently has 15 UK outlets, with shops in New York and Dublin about to open. Thomas Pink shirts are made of fine, twofold Egyptian cotton poplin, have extra-long tails, a generous box cut, sleeves pleated into the cuffs and semi-cut-away collars, and at £49.50 they are as good as you can get. The new Continental range begins at £69 per shirt and features bold pinks, lilacs, yellows and mint greens, in Royal Oxford cloth

and with a more pointed collar. Checks (unobtrusive ones are in), stripes and plains are all a part of the Pink repertoire.

T.M. Lewin will be 100 years old next year. There is something to be said for having made your own shirts for that long, and the company has a factory in Southend that continues the tradition admirably. Prices start at £47.50 for a cotton poplin shirt, with the new Lewin collection, tailored from the very highest quality fabrics and weaves, at £55 per shirt. Lewin shirts are known for their durability and comfort. They have a distinctly generous cut, a split back yoke, a long tail and double-stitched seams, and are available with the option of double or button cuffs. Removable collar stiffeners come as standard. Uniquely, T.M. Lewin offers four sleeve lengths and four collar sizes, with the full range of patterns and plains you would expect to find plus some surprises. In addition, the company has a flourishing mail order business. Once again, superlatives are in order.

Dolce and Gabbana



Oswald Boateng



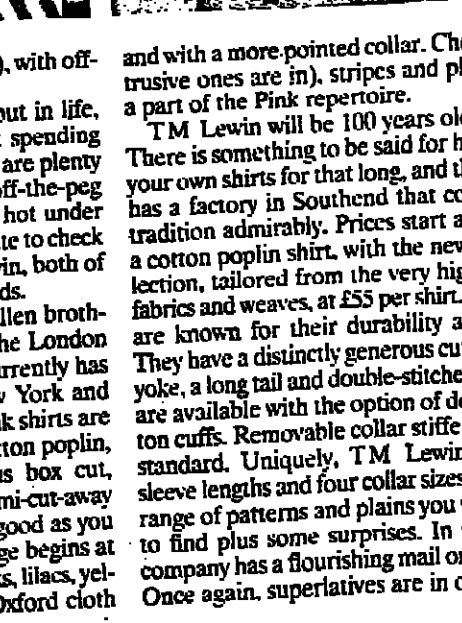
Marks and Spencer



Paul Smith



Hilditch and Key



Ad Watch

The emotional charge of a mushy pea

If you thought mushy peas were safely banished to a dim memory of school dinners, think again. Like bangers and mash and shepherd's pie, mushy peas are on the menus of some of London's smartest eateries – courtesy of Gary Rhodes, among others. In an attempt to cash in, Batchelors has launched its first national advertising campaign for tinned mushy peas.

The market research company Euromonitor, although tinned peas remain the second most popular canned food after tomatoes, sales fell by 12.7 per cent from £63m to £55m between 1992 and 1996. "[Tinned] peas are not only losing out to convenience foods," Euromonitor concludes. "They're also part of a traditional diet which has fallen out of favour with



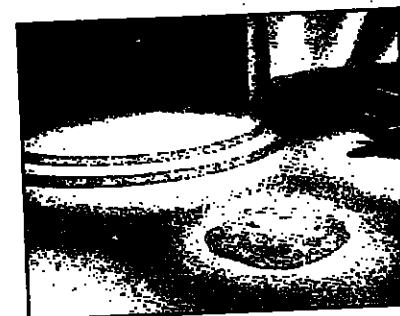
"Nobody makes peas mushy like Batchelors", the TV commercial claims, as it shows a plump green pea reduced to a blubbery mulch when confronted with a *This Is Your Life*-style reunion of friends and family. The commercial follows an earlier ad first run two years ago in northern England, where it resulted in a 26 per cent increase in local sales.

"Peas play a central role in Batchelors' heritage," explains Sara Bennison, an account director at the advertising agency Ammirati Puris Lintas. "Batchelors was the first to put peas in tins 21 years ago. However, by 1994, the market for canned peas was in long-term decline." Batchelors had not advertised the product

many UK consumers, especially higher income groups.

Mushy peas certainly polarise opinion. "They remind me of my childhood – they taste comforting," says Anna Jones, a midlander seen shopping in Tesco this week. "Which is exactly why I'd never eat them again," grimaces her friend, Margaret Hunter, a southerner born and bred.

"People either love them, or hate them," Bennison concedes. However, she believes the product – now known by the Batchelors marketing team as "Yorkshire caviar" – can bridge this gulf. Shoppers associate certain emotional values with the product, even if they no longer eat it, she claims. "People see it as 'eccentric' yet 'honest'.



since 1988, but the company decided to give it one last go with a modest (in advertising terms, at least) £250,000 budget.

Batchelors has now decided to go national. "It's really a northern brand, but we want to tap into the current British food revival," says Collette Lux, of Batchelors' parent company, Van den Bergh Foods. "People are returning to traditional culinary values. Mushy peas have as much national relevance as Boddingtons, which comes from Manchester."

Peas, it seems, have got trendy. The new campaign is a shrewd strategy driven by necessity: according to

Most people have eaten mushy peas at some time. The point is to get them to try eating them again.

No direct competitor challenges Batchelors' market dominance, but own-label mushy peas are a constant threat. Batchelors, however, has a secret weapon. Step forward the super-plump "Bunting pea". It may be an uphill struggle against prejudice, but in a market long characterised by slimmer peas, tough tactics are required. "We use the term 'voluptuous'," Bennison explains. "It's all part of an attempt to turn the market on its head and say: 'big is good'."

Meg Carter

NO SOFT DRINK



HOT FROM JAMAICA

Also available in 1.5 litre bottles

homes & money

When the family leaves home

... why don't you? By Penny Jackson

There comes a time in life when climbing up a ladder in gale-force winds to replace roof tiles is just not on. Rebellion sets in after years of patching up the family home - and an increasing number of couples are determined not to spend their retirement mowing acres of lawn and painting crumbling sash windows. It can be as much a relief as a wrench to sell up.

That's not to say that these empty-nesters, liberated from domestic toil, are going to be satisfied with a home of box-like proportions. Nor are they by any means ready to head for purpose-built retirement homes. There are the grandchildren to house from time to time, to say nothing of the furniture.

Developers and agents alike have found that the key requirements for empty-nesters are security and low maintenance, combined with character and reasonable space. Beaufort Homes even makes the point of putting a huge old wardrobe in its show flat at Imperial Apartments in Cheltenham.

The buying power of the newly retired, who more often than not will have a good pension and all the financial advantages of trading down, puts them in a strong market position. At present they are selling the kind of houses that are in short-

est supply, and with the huge expansion in high-quality new homes and the conversion of large, redundant buildings to residential use, empty-nesters are in a section of the market that is spoilt for choice. They can even be adventurously flexible about the area they choose.

Take David and Margaret Ormerod. They have recently moved to rural Norfolk from their home base in Kent via Bournemouth and Cornwall. Their wide-ranging search ended at a disused US Air Force base at Wicken Green, near Fakenham. The once treeless site has been planted with a thousand saplings, and the officers' bungalows renovated and painted. "We fell for the peace and quiet and the space of the homes," says David Ormerod, who is a complete newcomer to Norfolk. "We have three double-sized bedrooms and a huge living room. The ceilings are high and the light is enormous. The garden is a good size, too."

New owners are beginning to stamp their individuality on the previously uniform village of 210 homes, described by the developers, Brunswick Homes, as having a "Continental feel". It was important to Mr Ormerod that it should evolve as a mixed community, not as a preserve for the retired, whose numbers are growing fast. "I'm not at that stage in my life. You

need an assortment of people around you. I've met more people in the months here than I did in Sittingbourne the whole time I was there."

But it is security, such as cameras at the gate, that the Ormerods value above all else. "People tried to break into our house in Kent, and we could never leave the car unlocked, whereas here we have no worries," says David Ormerod. With the money saved on trading down to homes which initially sold for about £30,000, he intends to invest in a place in Tenerife. "We need to be able to leave it [Norfolk] for a few months of the year."

Buyers in their sixties have a very clear idea of what they want. Berkeley Homes houses, which have solid floors and plenty of well-crafted detail, are popular with couples making the transition from old to new.

"They come and talk to us at an early stage of construction because they know exactly what has to go where," says Paul Vallone, sales and marketing director of the company. "We will put in an Aga, say, if that's what they are used to."

No one who is used to a comfortable, stylish home will compromise simply because they need something smaller. Indeed, the old-fashioned country cottage tends to lose its appeal if an attractive but more manageable alternative is on offer.



Empty nesters: David and Margaret Ormerod who made a fresh start in Norfolk

PHOTOGRAPH: KEITH DOWNEY

Liz White and her husband William left an old cottage in the Reading area for a new version with a garage, in a small development in Great Bedwyn. They wanted real countryside away from busy roads, a factor in many older people's decision to move. Beaufort's mixture of homes next to the church extends rather than intrudes on the village. "We have pubs, bakers, a stonemason and a basket maker, just the sort of friendly village we were looking for," says Mrs White. The rail link means they do not have to rely on a car. "We are also within zimmer-frame distance from the doctors," she adds.

Another rich source of smallish country homes is the barn conversion, which is emerging from its rather tattered Eighties image of slapdash and cheap workmanship. Philip Blanchard, of John D Wood, knows why barns appeal to the older buyer. "The size of the rooms means that people don't have to get rid of their furniture."

Hugh Kitchen from Hampshire, who specialises in barn conversions, says you get the feel of a period building, but with a modern interior. Barns are also spacious and secure. "We keep as much that is original as we can. At Chawton we put

sitting rooms on the first floor to get the most from the vaulted ceilings." In Hampshire, good conversions start at more than £200,000.

Devon and Cornwall, though, still have enormous pull with the retired. Madeline Collins, of Marchand Petit in Kingsbridge, has hundreds of enquiries from people wanting to move to the area. "Most have come for holidays for years. Their perfect house, on the Salcombe estuary with a waterfront and sea views, is not only rare, but will cost upwards of half a million." You can buy a lot of old American air base homes for that kind of money.

House policy: taking sides on gazumping and the law

When staff at Hampstead office turned up for work recently, they found the word "gazumper" scrawled in white paint across the windows. Clearly, one of the many victims of gazumping wished to make a point. He or she would doubtless welcome the Labour Party's intention to outlaw the practice. Gazumping - when a vendor, having already accepted an offer, takes a higher one from another buyer - is a feature of a high-demand, low-volume market such as the present one. The last time it was prevalent was in the Eighties boom, but calls for the problem to be addressed died away during the recessionary Nineties.

Estate agents, who deplore the practice without being able to do anything to prevent it, quite naturally take the brunt of a victim's anger. Marc Goldberg of Hampstead says that if a vendor reneges on a deal, it is the agent who breaks the bad news to the buyer and is often regarded as guilty by association. "We are very unpopular at the moment and I would support

any steps to bring an end to gazumping. But if it is to work, I believe there should be a financial penalty, such as a non-refundable deposit. When gazumping happens, the extra amount agents receive in commission is negligible compared to the damage done to our standing."

Hugh Drummond-Hardy, chief executive of the National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA), wants to see backing for a pre-contract deposit agreement which would be legally binding. Under the agreement, a buyer and seller would each put up 0.5 per cent of the value of the agreed price and commit themselves to an exchange of contract within a certain number of weeks. The jilted party would be paid the deposit, which should at least cover the costs of solicitors' fees and the survey. "I would support the Labour Party's proposals as long as they do not hamper the workings of the market. The compensation should be sufficient for both parties to be mindful of the penalty for breaking the agreement, but not so much that it ties up sales."

A pre-contract agreement has some of the features of the Scottish system, which many people look to as a shining example of how it could be done. But the NAEA believes the differences in the two systems would make it unworkable in the rest of the UK. John Brown of DTZ Debenham Thorpe in Edinburgh explains that even under the Scottish system gazumping occurs. Buyers have to be satisfied on a number of issues, including the survey, before they sign a contract. Unless the seller has all the documentation ready it can be a slow process. There is nothing to stop gazumping in this period, he said. "Also if legislation is to be even-handed it should apply to gazumping (when buyers re-offer at a lower price in a falling market) as well as gazumping."

The penalty for not completing on time is severe. "If you exchange missives, agreeing to all the terms, one of those conditions is likely to be a payment of 3 or 4 per cent above bank rate for every day you haven't paid for the house," says Mr

Brown. "What I would really like the Labour Party to look at is the 1979 Estate Agents Act. The last part requiring anyone advising on property to be professionally qualified has not been implemented. That would make a difference."

Penny Jackson



Labour's plans to curb gazumping are laudable, but unworkable. That's the view taken by many estate agents. Under Labour's proposals for a costs guarantee system, either party going back on the deal would have to reimburse the other's costs. However, there are so many legitimate reasons for backing out before contracts are signed, that the system could end up creating as many victims as it saves. As Jonathan Harrington of agents Knight

Frank points out, you could have your offer on a house accepted and then find your mortgage surveyor says it's not worth the money. If you couldn't afford to make up the difference yourself, you would be forced to pull out. You would then have to pay the other side's costs. Would this be fair? "There has to be an escape clause for instances like this. It is terribly unfair if the vendors change their minds about selling, leaving you £3,000 out of pocket for survey and legal fees, but suppose you pulled out on the advice of your lawyer because of a problem with the title deeds? Should you be penalised? "Gazumping is an appalling way to behave, but this plan won't make the slightest difference to the sellers. They may have to compensate the buyer, but the extra they receive from the higher offer would cover that. It may soften the blow for the buyer, but he still loses the home he wanted to buy."

Buyers should still have the right to withdraw, say agents, because their reasons may be compelling. A death in the family, divorce, losing one's job, being relocated, or a sudden change of financial situation - any of these could result in the collapse of an agreement. "I don't believe you can legislate against gazumping," says Harrington.

Robin Featherick of Strutt & Parker agrees. "I can't see how it is possible to eradicate it, or legislate against it effectively, although we thoroughly disapprove of it. What would happen if this plan goes

ahead is that an offer would be made subject to everything under the sun. There are just too many loopholes that would be used by buyers and sellers."

The much-wanted Scottish system has also been debated. Where once there was a clean offer, now, says Knight Frank's Colin Strang Steel in Edinburgh, it comes with 40 conditions attached. "The to-ing and fro-ing can go on for months. During that time either party can withdraw, though it is usually the purchaser who does so."

The Labour plan may have limited use as a deterrent to buyers withdrawing, especially fantasists who have no intention of carrying through their offer, says Harrington. "The only solution is to get the contracts signed as quickly as possible, giving no chance for gazumping," he says. "My view is that the lock-out agreement is the best weapon. It provides for a period of time in which the vendor must take the property off the market and is not able to offer it to others. This gives protection over the time limit concerned. Of course there is nothing to stop a vendor delaying exchange of contracts until the end of the term and then accepting a higher offer."

The Labour plan, says Harrington, is a fine principle, but it's shot through with holes. "It sounds wonderful stuff. I hope it's not just intended to attract votes."

Rosalind Russell

TEL: 0171 293 2222

property • residential

FAX: 0171 293 2505

New Homes	New Homes	Retirement Homes	Hampstead & Highgate	Services
<p>SPACIOUS APARTMENTS IN A LAKESIDE SETTING</p> <p>Weybridge, Surrey. Luxurious 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom apartments with a large balcony or patio.</p> <p>Prices from £240,000 to £345,000 leasehold</p> <p>Broadwater Place, Weybridge, Surrey. Show apartment open daily 10-4pm. 01932 252697. Agents: Curchods 01932 247777</p>	<p>North Norfolk</p> <p>Large selection of spacious 2 & 3 bedroom, semi-detached bungalows in a well tended and established private village setting. Close to North Norfolk Coast, Fakenham 5 miles, Norwich 30 miles, King's Lynn 20 miles.</p> <p>Features include: solid built, double glazing, oil/heating, fitted kitchen and bathroom, 27 foot lounge, own driveway and open fire garage.</p> <p>Prices from £34,950 - 2 beds, £38,950 - 3 beds.</p> <p>Also available for the DIY enthusiast a selection of 2 & 3 bedroom bungalows in need of modernisation.</p> <p>Prices from £25,000 - 2 beds, £28,000 - 3 beds.</p> <p>Once in a lifetime opportunity.</p> <p>Prices never to be repeated. To be sold on a first come first served basis.</p> <p>For full details, call: Brunswick Homes 01485 528090</p>	<p>THE LITTLE BOLTONS</p> <p>Colchester Court SW5</p> <p>Specialise in the sale of properties in the London area. We have a large portfolio of properties for sale. We are now looking for more properties to add to our portfolio. We are particularly interested in properties in the London area. We are also interested in properties in the South East. We are open 9am to 6pm. Tel: 0171-373 8629</p>	<p>J. D. Cliff and Company</p> <p>Insurance brokers</p> <p>38 Berry Lane - Longbridge - 01772 785286</p> <p>Home Insurance Specialists</p> <p>For Over 60 years.</p> <p>Quality Buildings Insurance is just one call away!</p> <p>Home Connect Club</p> <p>24 Hour 365 Day Club Line for claims, Assistance and Emergency Repairs</p> <p>Personal Incident Manager - Approved Tradesmen</p> <p>* 10% off Standard Rates</p> <p>For more details telephone 01772 785286</p> <p>with the age of the property and amount of insurance cover you require</p> <p>Quote this advertisement and regardless of your premium we will also pay any lender's fee for you.</p> <p>Underwritten by Norwich Union</p> <p>Visit our web site: http://www.world.com/insurance.com/homepages/bugroup</p>	<p>To Let</p> <p>BARLS COURT, LGE and turn. 1 bed, 2nd fl flat, 50sqm, 3 mins to bus, 10 mins to rail. Tel: 0181 944 0888</p> <p>Wandsworth</p> <p>RIVERSIDE LISTED 2 bed former Taverner, log fire, beams, courtyard, garden. C168,000. 01888 880702</p>

To advertise in this section please call the Property Team on 0171 293 2302/2343.

Anyone who has spent any time listening to stockbrokers in their pomp will know all about the old adage that bull markets "climb a wall of worry".

What it means is that there are always reasons to be anxious about the current level of share prices if you want to find them – and the higher the market goes during a bull market, the more serious those worries seem to become.

The successful trader, so your friendly broker will tell you, must be bold and blithe enough to ignore the warning voices that will inevitably accompany any protracted surge in the stock market – else he will miss the best part of the fun.

Like most things that old hands say about the stock market, this always seems better advice in hindsight – when you know what subsequently happened – than it does at the time.

Of course, it seems obvious now that the Mexican debt crisis in August 1982 marked the start of the current 15-year bull market in shares: it just didn't seem that way at the time.



Jonathan Davis

The worriers are at it again. Maybe we should take them seriously

Likewise, any old fool can see that the 1987 crash was just a blip in the long upward march of Wall Street.

We know now that it was merely an ordinary correction to a clearly overvalued market which unexpectedly spiralled out of control thanks to a previously untested invention called portfolio insurance.

This was the technique, you will recall, invented by some American computer boffins which allowed computers to run portfolios for institutions and ordered them to sell whenever shares fell more than a certain percentage.

It took the 1987 crash to discover it had a serious bug – once the market's fall had reached a certain point, the system merely became a recipe for *auto de fe*, with each wave of selling automatically creating more orders to sell.

At the time, however, most people worried that the crash was a portent of some far more serious economic setback – and for some countries, including Britain, where inflation was starting to take off after the Lawson boom, those concerns were not entirely misplaced.

Now it does not take a genius to

notice that the worriers are at it all over again. The difference this time is that the wall of worry the market is climbing is not economic – the US economy, as Mr Greenspan conceded, has rarely looked healthier – but simply the value of the market itself.

It is hard, as I said a few weeks ago, not to take seriously the many well-regarded voices which now believe that Wall Street has become a very risky place at current valuation levels.

On almost any historical valuation criterion, we have entered unprecedented territory. And since the voices now include Alan

Greenspan, the chairman of the Federal Reserve, the man whose decisions can do most to stop the markets in his tracks, it is no longer simply enough merely to scoff at the worriers' concerns.

This week Mr Greenspan, giving his half-yearly account of the state of the economy to Congress, repeated his concerns about the current bull market.

He repeated his warning that the stock market was showing signs of "irrational exuberance" and suggested that higher interest rates could be needed soon to stop a resurgence of inflation. There can be no doubt that the world's

most powerful central banker was going out of his way to try to dampen Wall Street's continued buoyancy.

As the market took little notice of Mr Greenspan's hint last time, why should it pay any attention now? Well, one reason is that it usually takes actions, not words, to stop a genuinely rampant bull market.

As long as Mr Greenspan goes on talking about the need for interest rate rises, but refrains from actually making them, some investors may be tempted to go on calling his bluff.

That in a way is precisely how the irrationality which the Fed chairman was warning about manifests itself.

But Mr Greenspan's problem is that he knows – and admitted again this week – that the US economy is in remarkably good shape.

What concerns him most, I suspect, is not the fact that the market has been strong, but the way that those who have been busy pushing the bull market case have now started to justify their case.

As conventional valuation criteria no longer support current

share prices, the recourse of the bulls now is to the "once in a lifetime" rationale that spells particular danger.

There was a telling example the other day at the Davos economic forum, where a group of prominent academics and businessmen sat down to debate – in all earnestness – the proposition that the "business cycle" has been abolished.

The argument here is that computers and new business practices, such as "just in time" delivery of goods, are eliminating the need for companies to hold large amounts of stocks.

It is the ups and downs of the stock cycle which some believe is the principal cause of the business cycle itself.

Do you believe that? If you do, then this is your kind of stock market. I know that I don't – and it is clear that Mr Greenspan does not either.

History, he said, is full of "new eras" that turned out to be mirages. The four most dangerous words in investment, as another old market adage goes, are "this time it is different". It never is.

Where do I find good advice?

Rachel Fixsen has a few suggestions

There are around 28,000 financial products on the market. Which one do you want? More importantly, which one do you really need?

We can always do our own research to get at the facts, of course. It may require a long sabbatical – and a lot of background reading. Interested? Let's face it, most of us have better things to do.

For comprehensive planning, financial advisers can help negotiate the minefield. They have the resources and expertise to know which products are around and, for those that are independent, have a legal requirement to recommend the most suitable product for you.

The problem is that all too often choosing the right adviser can seem even more daunting than picking one's way through the financial maze itself.

There is a range of choices: ☐ A tied agent who could be a representative of a bank or insurer, can only sell you products from one company.

☐ An independent adviser (IFA) can offer you a product from any company. They must have professional qualifications and are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority (PIA).

☐ Financial planners are good



If you need a complete review of your financial circumstances.

☐ Solicitors and accountants may also be authorised to give financial advice.

How do you find a reputable adviser who is not going to sell you ostriches? Garry Heath, chairman of the IFA Association, a trade body for financial advisers, recommends talking to your friends. "There are 9 million clients of IFAs out there," he says.

If you cannot get a personal recommendation the following phone services will help you track one down:

☐ IFA Promotion, on 0117 971 1177 gives you addresses of three IFAs in your area.

☐ Money Management magazine has a list of fee-based advisers. (Call 0117 976 9444 for list of six nearest to you.) ☐ If your financial affairs are complex or you have a high net worth, the Institute of Financial Planning has a register of members available by calling 0117 930 4434.

☐ The Solicitors for Independent Financial Advice helpline on 01372 721172.

It pays to make some checks before parting with money. A financial adviser must be

authorised by his or her relevant watchdog. For IFAs this is the PIA; for solicitors it is the Law Society and for accountants it is the Institute of Chartered Accountants. You can call these organisations or the Securities and Investments Board, the overall regulator, on 0171 929 3652 to make sure your adviser is bona fide.

How qualified is the adviser? By the end of June, all advisers must have a benchmark qualification. This is usually the Financial Planning Certificate (FPC), set at three levels. The exams are set and marked by the Chartered Insurance Institute (CII). A range of alternative qualifications are allowed. If in doubt, contact the PIA on 0171 538 8860.

Qualifications are a useful way of telling what the overall knowledge is of the adviser concerned. But they do not convey the IFA's ability to put that knowledge to use in a creative way on your behalf.

Many lone IFAs and firms have the backing of a large IFA network, which helps them with research into products and helps with compliance issues. However, simply belonging to one of these networks is no guarantee.

Amanda Davidson, a partner at Holden Meehan, a London firm of IFAs, suggests asking plenty of questions at the first meeting. How long has the firm been in business? Is it qualified? Does it have areas of specialism? If the adviser is a sole trader, is there any back-up? Ask them to give you two clients as referees.

Be prepared to walk away: "You may just not feel comfortable with them, and want to move on," she adds.

One potentially embarrassing question concerns the adviser's remuneration. Given that the whole purpose of going to an IFA is to talk about money, this is not a sensible approach. Essentially, advisers are paid either on a straightforward fee system or they earn commission.

Financial advisers must now tell you the commission they would earn from that sale. This is so clients do not feel the advice is biased either way.

IFAs working on a fee-only basis might charge £100-£150 an hour in central London and £50-£100 in the provinces. One can usually agree a complete fee in advance. They will then rebate any commission back to you.

THE Election Beater Mortgage

Worried about interest rate rises? Take one of the **BEST rates NOW - and FIX it for FOUR YEARS!**

- ☒ Four full years at an outstanding fixed rate of **7.09%**
- ☒ Protects you against likely post-election rate rises
- ☒ Exclusively funded by a Top Ten building society

ONLY AVAILABLE from your local Mortgage Intelligence broker. Phone **FREE** anytime on

0800-246-000

• **MORTGAGE** •

INTELLIGENCE

Britain's Largest Group of Mortgage Brokers

MD 1/3 ELECT

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT. Credit subject to age, status & valuation. Additional security, life insurance & credit brokerage fees may be required. Written details on request. Funds available at time of APR 7.4% going to press.

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PENSIONS

www.equitable.co.uk

Regulated by The Personal Investment Authority

PENSIONS BY PHONE

24 hours a day..... 7 days a week..... Now you can pick up the phone and get pensions information or advice and even set up a plan, quickly and without fuss.

0345 6789 10

or talk to your Independent Financial Adviser

SCOTTISH WIDOWS

For your protection, your calls to Scottish Widows may be recorded. Information or advice will only be provided on Scottish Widows' products. Issued by Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society, a mutual company. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

It's different for women

Take two adults – one male, one female. They are the same age, have the same jobs and identical lifestyles. Their financial planning needs are the same, aren't they?

In fact, the opposite is true. Women find themselves paying more, or less, than men across a wide range of finance products.

In effect, the same potential outcomes – financial security when ill, a decent retirement income, even car insurance – require different inputs from women.

These differentials are set to continue, despite changes in the law, such as this week's planned government reforms entitling divorced people, usually women, to a share in their partners' pensions when a marriage ends.

Take permanent health insurance, an income payable when a person is unable to return to work after a lengthy illness. Holden Meehan, a firm of independent financial advisers in London, says cover worth £20,000 a year for a woman aged 30, in a low-risk occupation, would cost £33.76 a month. By contrast, a male of the same age would pay only £18.60 a month. At age 35, women pay £42.18, compared to just £22.98 for men.

Amanda Davidson, a partner at Holden Meehan, explains women's higher claims experience: "It is tough being a woman. I suspect the pressures of modern living, where a woman has so many roles to play, mean more stress on body and soul, and hence more claims. Women are also more complicated physically than men, so there is more to go wrong."

The differential is reversed in the case of critical illness cover, a different type of

Nic Cicutti discovers why financial security usually costs them more

insurance where a lump sum is paid out when sudden illnesses strike, such as heart attacks and strokes or cancer being diagnosed. John Joseph, a London financial adviser specialising in this field, says cover of £100,000 for a woman aged 45 might cost £42.60 a month. However a man might expect to pay £35.70.

This variation increases with age: women aged 55 pay £95.50 a month compared with £128.40 for men. By contrast, at age 30, the differential favours men, if anything: £14.20 compared to £15.70 for women.

Mr Joseph says: "Typically, with this type of contract women have had higher rates of cancer than men but they did not appear to suffer from coronary or respiratory diseases, which meant they paid less."

"But this is changing as underwriters obtain more up-to-date claims experience and it is likely that women will have to pay more."

Private medical insurance is an exception – for now. Bupa, the largest provider, does not differentiate between men and women but on the basis of age. A person of either sex aged 30 would expect to pay £23.68 a month for Bupa's more basic type of cover. But John Castagna, Bupa head of product development, warns the company is reviewing this policy following competition from providers which charge gender-based premiums.

With life insurance, the straightforward type of cover which pays out in the event of death, the picture is the same. Prudential, the giant UK insurer, would charge a 30-year-old woman £19 a month for cover worth £100,000. A man would pay £21. Ten years later, however, the man would pay £42, with the woman charged just £28 a month.

Norman Turner, head of financial planning at Prudential, says: "Although mortality rates have improved for men and women, the differential in terms of how much longer women live has tended to remain the same."

Women's longevity relative to men also has a big effect on their retirement income. But here, social factors also play an important role. The fact that women live longer means that when they retire, their pension is less than a male's at the same age. Figures from the Annuity Bureau, the retirement income specialist in London, show that a male smoker aged 60 would expect to receive an income worth £7,936 for a £75,000 lump sum. A female smoker would receive only £7,060.

Peter Quinton, who runs the Annuity Bureau, says: "In general, companies will pay a similar amount to men and women. Because women live longer, they receive less but over a longer period."

This longevity means that for women to receive the same pension as men, they must pay in more. According to Black

Horse Financial Services, part of Lloyds Bank, a woman aged 35 would expect to pay about £180 a month to receive a pension worth £10,000 at 65. By contrast, a man would pay £160.

Clearly advance planning is critical in this area. Yet research by Fleming, the fund manager, shows 53 per cent of women will face a sharp drop in income when they retire, against 40 per cent of men. An important contributor to poor pensions is not just lower pay, but career breaks. A woman who takes five years off might receive a pension worth at least 15 per cent less than someone who remains in work.

Women also have to pay out more when it comes to meeting the cost of long-term care (LTC). Sandy Johnstone, who heads a unit specialising in LTC products for Commercial Union, says a woman aged 65 would expect to pay £67.60 a month to insure for cover worth £10,000 a year. A man pays £52.80.

Roddy Kohn, a financial adviser at Kohn Cougar, a Bristol firm, says: "The bottom line is that women must begin planning earlier and in more detail than men. The good news is that if they do, they can offset many of the financial handicaps they are likely to face."

Relief may come in the form of lower car insurance premiums. Premium Search, a telephone insurer, says a 30-year old London teacher driving a Vauxhall Cavalier would only pay £293 in premiums, compared to £302 for her male opposite number. The company says men tend to have fewer accidents than women but the cost of their claims tends to be higher.

The sex gap: how men and women compare

Women	Men
£293	£302
£33.76pm	£18.60pm
£42.60pm	£55.70pm
same	same
£28pm	£42pm
£7,060pa	£7,936pa
£160pm	£160pm
£67.60pm	£52.80pm

Age 30 unless otherwise stated. See text for sources and policy and provider details.



LOOSE CHANGE

London & Country Mortgages, the mortgage broker, is linking with National Counties Building Society to launch a five-year fixed-rate loan at 7.39 per cent. Call 0800 373300.

Gartmore is extending the no-charge offer on its Global PEP until 31 May. The fund also operates no exit, switching or withdrawal charges on its portfolio. Call 0800 289336.

Chase de Vere is launching

SERIOUS PENSIONS INFORMATION

www.equitable.co.uk

Regulated by The Personal Investment Authority

a three-year fixed mortgage, charging 6.60 per cent until March 2000. A lender's fee of £295 applies. The redemption penalty is three months' interest for three years. Call 0800 747374.

Birmingham Midshires is relaunching its five-year fixed-interest Retirement Bond, paying monthly interest of 7.1 per cent gross. Call 0500 070707.

Abbey National has launched a Premium Reward Bond, offering up to 6.8 per cent gross. The bond has a minimum 12-month term. Call 0800 100801.

Albany Life is launching a Guaranteed Equity Bond, offering capital guarantees plus the chance to share in gains recorded by the FTSE 100 share index. Call 01707 669000.

Skandia Life is launching an umbrella PEP which allows the option of investing in a range of different fund managers' unit trusts. Call 0800 243509.

8% NET PA
PAYABLE MONTHLY
UNTIL NOVEMBER
2001

Partridge Muir & Warren

Now you can guarantee yourself monthly payments until the year 2001 with The Gold Chip® Constant High Income Plan from Partridge Muir & Warren.

In association with **NORWICH UNION** This brilliantly simple plan uses an annuity from Norwich Union to pay a very healthy monthly payment of 8.0% p.a. net* of income tax for lower and basic rate taxpayers. Higher rate taxpayers will have to pay further income tax which will reduce their annual return. These annuity payments are part interest and part capital.

Meanwhile shares in Investment Trusts, selected by PMW, aim not only to return your capital but offer the prospect of increasing it to produce a surplus, however the value of stock market investments can go down as well as up and you may not get back the full amount invested.

*The return quoted is correct at the time of going to press and assumes a full return of capital. Levels and bases of tax could change.

Post the coupon or telephone Partridge Muir & Warren on Freephone **0800 132 549**

Please send me full details of the Gold Chip® Constant High Income Plan.

Full name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Date of birth: _____

Long term contact details: _____

Registered for The Financial Services Authority

THE PEOPLE WITH CAPITAL IDEAS

Quite simply, an outstanding pension.

**YOUR PENSION:
IN YOUR OWN TIME,
IN YOUR OWN WAY.**

A Merchant Investors pension is an easy, convenient and flexible pension.

The charges are low.

You can vary your contributions without charge.

Pay no commission when you buy direct.

No sales person will bother you.

Merchant Investors Assurance

Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and part of Allianz - one of Europe's largest insurers.

Mail this coupon to: Merchant Investors Assurance Company Limited, Freeport BS 6013, Bristol BS1 2UZ. MR - MRS - MISS / MS (please circle as appropriate).

INITIALS SURNAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

Are you EMPLOYED or SELF EMPLOYED? (please circle)

If EMPLOYED, are you in your company pension scheme?

YES or NO (please circle) (IND 01/03/97)

CALL NOW ON
0800 374857
FOR A BROCHURE

Christians out of the lions' den

Financial adviser Amanda Davidson finds solutions for a family with three teenagers to educate

NAMES: John and Angie Beresford
AGE: Mid-40s
OCCUPATIONS: Electrical engineer and special needs teacher
BACKGROUND: John and Angie have three teenage daughters aged 13, 15 and 17. He earns £32,000 and she earns £23,000. Angie is about to change job and there will be a change to her pension scheme. As there is no "transfer club" she is wondering what to do with her current pension arrangements in the Teachers' Pension Scheme and also what contributions she should pay in future.

John has a money purchase arrangement with his current

firm and a pension transferred from his previous employment into Norwich Union.

They shortly will be receiving a lump sum of £25,000 from a maturing endowment policy. After paying off the loans and carrying out work on the property, they will be left with £15,000. Their main priority is to see that their children should have the opportunity to go to university.

They have a small amount of their investments in ethical funds. As practising Christians this is a consideration for their future investments.

THE ADVISER: Amanda Davidson, a partner at Holden Meehan, independent financial advisers in London.

THE ADVICE: Until John and Angie have decided what to do with their investment, they should put it into a building society account. This should be a postal account such as that operated by Cheltenham and Gloucester in their direct 30 account which will give a gross interest rate of 5.9 per cent or the Chelsea Post-tel 20-day account, giving 6.05 per cent gross.

The building society money should be held in Angie's name as she is a basic rate taxpayer. They should definitely pay off two personal loans they have. This will also release £200 a month which they could invest into further savings. They should check

that there are no early repayment penalties.

To provide their daughters with £3,000 a year in real terms for three years of university education each, they will need roughly £9,000 for their eldest daughter. The second daughter will require the remaining £6,000 plus £50 a month savings and the youngest will require £150 a month saved between now and when she first starts at university. Thus the Beresfords should be looking at investing the full £15,000 for their daughters' education, plus the £200 a month they can now save.

John has a PEP with Friends Provident which contains some ethical investment. He could



The Beresford family: Providing for university costs proved an important consideration

PHOTOGRAPH: NEWS TEAM

pay the £200 a month into this PEP. The remaining £100 a month should be invested in a Tessa. This spreads risk by opting for a more cautious approach than just a PEP.

As to the remaining lump sum, bearing in mind that £9,000 will be needed for the first daughter in a relatively short space of time, I would recommend that they put £6,000 in the building society once again held in Angie's name.

As far as the £6,000 for the second daughter is concerned, this could be invested in a slightly freer way. Angie has no PEP at the moment, so it would be sensible to use up her PEP allowance.

If they were not concerned about an ethical choice, then I recommend a company such as Fidelity or Perpetual.

From their building society investments and their Halifax mortgage, John and Angie can expect some shares. Curiously

these may be put into a PEP on top of their normal allowances of £9,000 per annum each. This must be done within 42 days of the issue of the shares. I recommend that they hold on to the Halifax shares and that they do put them into a PEP. John is a higher rate taxpayer and this makes sense. These shares could also be used to top up any funds that might be needed at university.

They have a part-endowment mortgage and a part-repayment mortgage with Halifax. The repayment mortgage is not covered by any separate life assurance. Life assurance for Angie would not cost a lot as they would only need it for a short period of time. An eight-year term assurance for £50,000 would cost Angie £9.30 a month.

Angie has a new pension scheme to consider. She needs to get details and look thoroughly at what she is entitled

to. She has 12 years' service in the Teachers' Pension Scheme, which has very good benefits. She needs to think carefully if she is to move this away from its secure environment.

On the calculations that I have done, Angie needs contributions of about 20 per cent of her income to achieve an overall pension of 40 per cent of her current salary including benefits. Thus if the contributions from her new employer are less than the 20 per cent, she needs to think carefully about making this up.

John's pension situation is quite healthy. On his current arrangements, he can look forward to a little under 60 per cent of his final salary at retirement. He has his previous employer's scheme transferred to a Norwich Union Personal Pension Plan. It has a value of £105,000. But if he were to die, Angie would receive only £15,000 as a return of the original investment. If he

wishes to change this, he can contact Norwich Union.

John also contracted out a Seps with a separate Scottish Widows policy. He is now at an age where he needs to consider carefully whether he wishes to remain contracted out. For the moment I would stay contracted out. Changes in the rebates mean the sensitive age has risen and will now be around 50 for men.

THE VERDICT: Amanda's summary captures the situation perfectly. There are still some unanswered questions but she has given super advice that we shall certainly act upon. Our primary concern is to be good stewards of the resources God has given us.

"So it is pleasing that Amanda feels our financial future is reasonably secure. Her advice with regards to the children is excellent while putting accounts in Angie's name to avoid tax liability is a masterstroke."

UK TRACKER PEP

A very low-cost way to share in the performance of the UK's top 100 companies. Tax free.



A new, very low-cost PEP

This PEP invests in the Scottish Widows UK Index Trust which aims to track the capital performance of the Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 Index.

The Index currently includes such well-known names as BP, Marks & Spencer and BT.

Average growth of the Index (with gross income reinvested) has been impressive - 15.1% p.a.* since February 1988.

Invest a lump sum from just £1,000.

Call now on
0345 6789 10
for further information
and quote reference number JC1

SCOTTISH WIDOWS

Issued by Scottish Widows Investment Management Limited. Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO.

The value of stockmarket investments and any income from them may fall as well as rise and investors may not get back the amount originally invested. Tax assumptions are subject to statutory change and the value in an investor's own circumstances. *Source: Mifcoral LLP, gross income reinvested. Over 5 years to 11.97 the Index would have provided average growth of 15.1% p.a. Please note 11.97 is the earliest date from which Mifcoral supplies figures for the Index allowing for reinvestment of gross income. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to the future. For your protection your calls to Scottish Widows may be recorded.

What a shock to the system to leave the sun-drenched streets of Harare, with their daytime temperature of 28°C, for the wind and rain-swept streets of London. Chiller temperature-wise, that is. Not so far as markets are concerned.

It is remarkable that in a few short days share prices have once again entered virgin territory. London is still building on 1996's useful performance - a rise made more significant by the impressive strength of sterling. The Zimbabwean stock market has not performed too badly, either.

The financial pages of last Tuesday's *Herald* - Harare's leading newspaper - pointed to foreign investment of nearly Zim\$4bn since June 1993 when the government opened up the market to foreign investment. Do not get too excited. There are nearly Zim\$18 to the pound, so we are talking about no more than around £250m.

The Zimbabwe stock exchange is the second-largest in Africa after South Africa. During 1996 it recorded a rise of 121 per cent, making it the fourth-best performing market after Hungary, Russia and Venezuela.

When I was there share prices were experiencing a modest retrenchment, although optimism seemed high following some of the heaviest rains seen in recent years. A good rainfall is important for this largely agricultural economy - just as well, as the manufacturing sector grew only 2.3 per cent in real terms last year.

Emerging markets no longer offer a quick buck

It put me in mind of the fact that emerging markets remain an exciting prospecting ground. Africa is not necessarily the best starting point, though.

While rich in natural resources, it lacks the dynamism of, say, the Far East. Political instability, famine and conflict all combine to deliver an uncertain outlook, while corruption is a continuing worry for international investment managers.

The reality is that it is becoming more and more difficult to find bargains in emerging markets. The guarantee of a swift profit no longer exists. Investing bankers have been putting more and more resources into this field, so competition to find the best investment has intensified massively, driving up prices and diminishing returns.

Much of the focus of attention presently has been in the old Communist bloc countries. The amount of direct investment by foreign institutions has been rocketing, with much of the money coming from western Europe and, in particular, Germany.



Brian Tora

assets, or simply grab a piece of the action, so it has become difficult to stick to the very tight criteria the good doctor adopted, which limited his risk.

Templeton remains an important and respected manager of emerging markets' assets, but the choice to the investor is now much wider with many highly regarded names offering funds.

It is not a one-way street, as any Albanian will tell you, but the abandonment of controlled economies and the liberalisation of trade and capital markets is throwing up opportunities not seen since the Industrial Revolution and the massive expansion of European commerce into Africa and the Far East last century.

Anyone with a bit of money to burn need look no further than a soundly managed emerging markets trust with a record - though few will have one that goes back further than Templeton's.

Brian Tora is chairman of the investment strategy committee at Greig Middleton.

GREAT VALUE PENSIONS

www.equitable.co.uk

Regulated by The Personal Investment Authority

Call now for tax-free growth

No initial charge, no exit charge*

Low annual charge of only 1%

High growth potential

The NatWest UK Tracker PEP is linked to the performance of the FT-SE 100 Index, ie the 100 largest listed companies in the UK. In fact, over the last five years the FT-SE 100 Index has grown by over 92%.

The stock market has consistently outperformed typical higher rate building society deposits in the past, so with the NatWest UK Tracker PEP your savings could achieve a much higher level of growth - and it's all tax-free.

You can start your NatWest UK Tracker PEP with just £1,000 or save regularly from £50 each month. You don't need to

open a NatWest current or savings account, or have any other bank or building society account. We'll help you open your NatWest UK Tracker PEP in the shortest time.

For more information visit our Application Form, or call 0800 85 45 81.

* Any investment is subject to market risk and may fall as well as rise.

Call Direct 0800 85 45 81

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Weekends 9am to 5pm (excluding bank holidays).

NatWest
More than just a bank

Unlike money in a bank or building society account, which is relatively secure, the value of your capital, and the income from it, may fluctuate up and down, and you may not recover the amount of your original investment. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. UK Tax should be regarded as a medium to long-term investment. We recommend a minimum of 5 years. The levels and bases of National Westminster Bank Plc and Ulster Bank Limited are members of the NatWest Life and NatWest UK Trust Marketing Group, and can advise on the life insurance, pensions and unit trust products only of that Marketing Group. National Westminster Bank Plc and Ulster Bank Limited are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO. The Financial Manager of the NatWest UK Trust PEP is National Westminster Unit Trust Managers Limited which is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO, based by National Westminster Bank Plc. Registered in England No 979027. Registered Office: 41 Lombard, London EC2P 2BP. Calls with NatWest may be monitored/recorded to maintain and improve our service.

هكذا من الأصل

Income and growth without losing your shirt

Distribution bonds offer a decent return – as well as peace of mind. Nic Cicutti reports

The search by investors for the elusive combination of respectable income plus good capital growth – and all without risking one's shirt – has led to the launch of a variety of savings products.

Today, the most popular investment, without doubt, is a personal equity plan. PEPs allow savers the opportunity for growth and income, all in a tax-free wrapper.

But there is one – currently unused – savings product that has attracted more than £3bn of savers' money. It has generally succeeded in growing ahead of inflation while offering a reasonable income. And apart from a cold suffered in 1994, it has proved a generally safe haven for funds.

Distribution bonds have proved a popular option for almost 200,000 savers in the past 15 years.

Essentially, they are a form of unit-linked savings scheme, with a generally conservative investment strategy. Funds are spread across a range of equities, gilts and other

fixed-interest investments. Income from bonds, usually paid on two distribution dates each year, is free of capital gains and income tax at the basic rate.

Among the most popular distribution bonds are those from Sun Life, Prudential, Allied Dunbar, Standard, Scottish Provident and Axa Equity & Law.

While generally considered a safer investment, different distribution funds will have varying investment strategies and risks attached to them. In turn, the annual income paid can vary between 4 and 7 per cent a year, depending on the bond. Sales of the bonds have waxed and waned compared with other products on the market.

Andrew Jones, a partner at the Aaron Partnership, a firm of independent financial advisers in Milton Keynes, says: "They were very popular until mid-1994. The problem came in that year when both equity and bond markets fell in the same year. Given that these products were marketed as low-risk funds, it

made a lot of people nervous." Since then, many investors have preferred other products, including with-profit bonds. But they have greater exposure to equities than distribution bonds.

Unlike PEPs, distribution bonds are the subject of a "tax-drag" effect on the life company fund itself. Higher-rate taxpayers can currently withdraw up to 5 per cent of the initial capital value each year, without paying any tax. They pay a further 16 per cent (17 per cent after 5 April) on sums above that 5 per cent.

For many savers, PEPs are a more sensible option, particularly given that some companies, including Sun Life, have set up plans under a tax-free wrapper which replicate faithfully the fund strategy of a distribution bond.

In fact, some financial advisers believe the bonds are not a useful investment tool at all. One, who refuses to be named, argues: "The particular mix of funds is one which can just as easily be set up by any

adviser through the right portfolio of investment trusts or PEPs, which may have lower charges.

"What worries me is that these are nice little commission-earners for advisers and they may put a client into a distribution bond before any other product."

Mr Jones argues that distribution bonds can still be useful: "If you have invested up to your PEP limit, a distribution bond may offer an additional opportunity for relatively risk-free investment."

Many advisers, including the Aaron Partnership, are prepared to enhance bonds through commission rebating or by obtaining better terms from the life company.

The company recommends that bonds are a better haven for spare cash than annuity products in retirement, as a supplement for those who have recently retired.

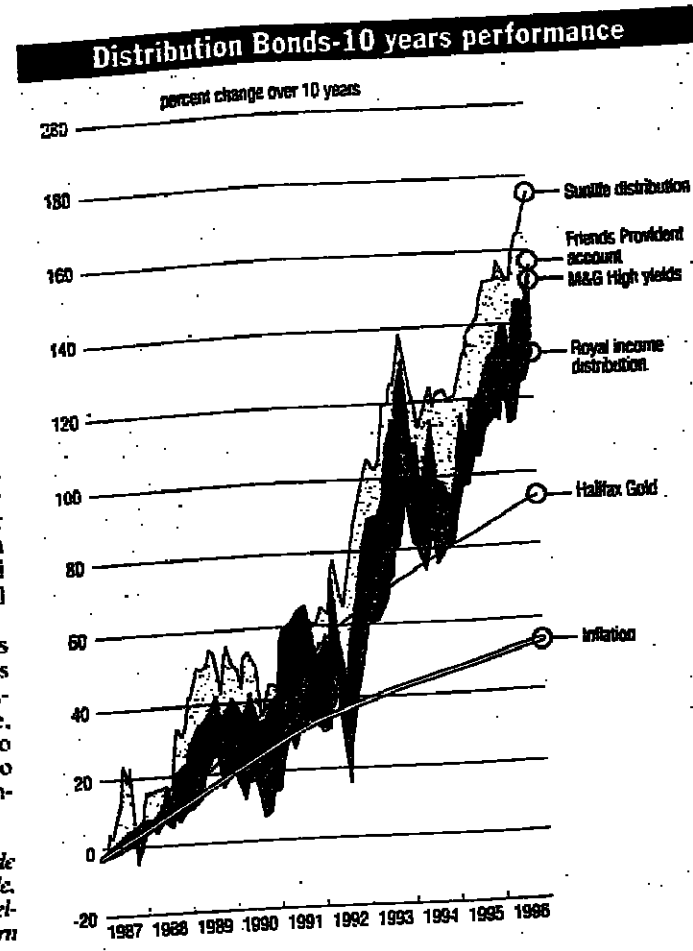
Despite the keen competition among bond providers, the company all the others still want to beat is Sun Life, whose fund was set up in 1979. The fund invests about 40

per cent in UK equities, a further 40 per cent in fixed-interest stocks and the remainder in cash or other convertibles.

It does not invest either in property or overseas equities, claiming this policy makes the fund more secure. Although it has ridden relatively unscathed through most market downturns, including the October 1987 crash or the dip after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the fund caught a cold in the 1994 downturn along with all others.

The key for distribution bonds, as with most investments, is to discuss the matter fully with an independent adviser first. But for some, these funds may be the answer to the age-old conundrum of how to provide safety, growth and reasonable income.

Copies of the Aaron Partnership guide to distribution bonds are available, price £2 (inc P&P), by writing to Shelton House, High Street, Woburn Sands, Milton Keynes, MK17 8SD.



Nic Cicutti

Pensions split will reduce the traumas of divorce

Divorce must be one of the most traumatic experiences that grown men and women can go through. The recognition that a broken relationship can no longer be mended and that permanent separation must take place is not a decision lightly taken.

For many women, there is then the problem of how they will survive financially. Often, the family depended solely or mostly on a husband's income. Now they must learn new skills, re-entering the jobs marketplace for the first time in years.

To cap it all, until now there has always been the problem of adequate pension provision for women after their divorce. In the past, many women discovered too late that divorce meant penury in retirement because their husband had retained all pension rights for himself.

That is why this week's decision on pension-splitting at divorce, announced by the Government, is a good move.

Ministers had long wanted to divide pensions after a divorce. However, the way they intended to do so was silly. In effect, they wanted pension-less divorcees to lay a claim to part of their former partner's pensions, but payable only when they retired.

The problem with this approach was that it left women tied to their ex-husbands' financial coat-tails, possibly for many years. Worse, it meant that if the husband died before retirement, the woman might receive no pension at all. It took a revolt in the Lords two years ago to force the Government to change its mind, as it finally did this week.

The problem is, however, that the Government has not said when this change will take place. It equivocated for two years, while another 360,000 couples divorced, and it now looks as if it may be at least one more year – and a further 180,000 divorces – before its proposals become law, whichever party wins the general election.

Perhaps one should not expect much more than this, given that we are at the end of the present administration. But there is something intensely annoying that a proposal so sensible has taken all these

years to make it to the statute books. The system has let hundreds of thousands of innocent people down.

Last week we inaugurated our advice column with a review of Paula Martin's finances. Paula had problems with a hideously expensive personal pension sold to her in the late 1980s by someone from a company called Merchant Investors.

On Monday, Merchant Investors were in touch with Paula to apologise for what happened. They have promised to reinstate her into the occupational pension scheme she should have joined all that time ago.

A few years ago, the company reviewed its charges and recognised it had a problem. It discarded most of its expensive admin fees for new pensions it sells, and is now one of the cheapest on the market.

But that still left people like Paula stuck on the old contracts. Significantly, the company has made a commitment to look at all policies from the same time to see if it can resolve problems any other policyholders may have. So, if you have a Merchant Investors pension dating to that period, get in touch with the company.

By the way, Paula's original salesman went off to join another company, now called Lincoln National. While there, he sold Paula another policy that may have been inappropriate. He was undoubtedly prolific and has probably given many other people the benefits of his salesmanship. Let's see if Lincoln National contacts us next week.

This week, the advice column discusses other subjects. Dozens of you have written asking for a review. We can't promise everyone will get one, but we hope to select cases that will give all readers food for thought. Keep writing in if you want to take part.

Indeed, if there is any point you want to make, a gripe about your financial provider, a (friendly) comment about one of this section's stories, send me a letter.

Write to: Nic Cicutti, Financial Advice Offer, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5DL.

The Index-Tracking PEP

A glance at the table will show that – since its launch just over one year ago – the Index-Tracking PEP from Legal & General has proved that it offers PEP investors unbeatable value for money.

It follows the FTSE All-Share Index.

This Index reflects the performance of the entire stockmarket, so it removes the risk of being over-exposed to shares which under-perform and lessen your return. In fact, £6,000 invested in the Legal & General Index-Tracking PEP last year would now be worth £7,696* compared to just £7,111 in the average UK Income & Growth Trust. And there's still time to invest this financial year.

NO
withdrawal fee
NO
initial charges
JUST
0.5% annual charge

UNBEATABLE COSTS...

At just 0.5% p.a., you won't find a cheaper PEP anywhere else. And there are still no initial charges or withdrawal fees to pay.

To find out more about the UK's best value PEP, call now, or return the coupon opposite.

Alternatively, you can contact us at <http://www.legal-and-general.co.uk>

*Source: LGIM, on an offer to bid basis based on all PEP charges with gross income reinvested from 01.11.95 (since launch) to 17.02.97. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. Both capital and income values may go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount invested. Tax assumptions are those currently applicable and are subject to statutory change. The value of tax relief will depend on your individual circumstances. Full written details are available on request. All statements are correct as at 01.01.97. Legal & General (Direct) Limited, Registered in England No. 2702080. Registered Office: Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 3TR. Representative, only of the Legal & General investment group, members of which are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and IMRO for the purposes of recommending, advising on and selling life assurance and investment products bearing Legal & General's name.

INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE SINCE LAUNCH* NOV 95 TO FEB 97		
	ANNUAL CHARGE	GROWTH
Legal & General	0.50%	28.27%
Kleinwort Benson	1.00%	27.52%
Virgin	1.00%	27.48%
Gartmore	1.00%	26.81%
Average UK Income & Growth Trust	—	18.52%

The Index-Tracking PEP that performs the best

(also costs the least)

ACT NOW

Find out more now – Phone free 0500 11 66 22
FREEPHONE 8am TO 8pm WEEKDAYS 9am TO 5pm WEEKENDS PLEASE QUOTE REF: A4DJ15

For your protection calls will usually be recorded and randomly monitored.

Post to: Legal & General (Direct) Limited, FREEPOST SWC0467, Cardiff CF1 1YW.
Please send me full written details of the Legal & General Index-Tracking PEP.

Surname (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) _____
Forenames _____
Address _____
Postcode _____ Date of birth / / _____
Tel. No: Home _____ Tel. No: Work _____

If you already have any PEP investment, please tick here ☐ A4DJ15

Legal & General
Investment Management

THE INDEPENDENT
Free guide to PEPs
A 32-page guide telling you everything you need to know about Personal Equity Plans
Mr/Ms/Ms _____
Address _____
Postcode _____
Tel. _____
Please tick this box if you don't wish to receive any future financial advice information ☐
Please phone 0500 125 888 or complete the coupon and return (no stamp required) to: _____
Independent CA Life guide FREEPOST Y05ER York YO1 1ER

No scramble for dinosaur eggs

Collect to invest: They may be old but they're not rare, says John Windsor

WITH-PROFITS BOND A worry-free investment offering the best of both worlds.

Security and Potential Capital Growth
If that sounds like your dream come true, then The Equitable With-Profits Bond is a winning combination for your investments.

With £500 you can invest in a managed fund of assets, which smooths the short-term fluctuations in value over the period of your investment.

What is more, we guarantee that, whatever future market conditions are like, at the fifth and subsequent anniversaries you can encash your Bond for its original value plus bonuses accrued.

So, you can strike a balance between keeping your savings safe in a building society, but possibly eroded by inflation, and the potentially lucrative but more risky option of investment in equities.

And, as part of your medium to long-term investment plans, The Equitable With-Profits Bond can play an important and profitable part.

Of course, you also have the reassurance and peace of mind which comes from dealing with The Equitable Life, the world's oldest mutual life office.

If you would like more information on achieving the best of both worlds with The Equitable With-Profits Bond, call (0990) 38 48 58, or return the coupon below for details by post and by telephone.

www.equitable.co.uk

Information advice will only be given on Equitable group products
Regulated by the Financial Services Authority

THE EQUITABLE LIFE, FREEPOST WALKER STREET, AYLESBURY, HUNTS, MK45 1BB
To: The Equitable Life, FREEPOST WALKER STREET, AYLESBURY, HUNTS MK45 1BB
I would like more information on The Equitable With-Profits Bond ☐ ENBCJA

NAME (Mr/Ms/Ms) _____
ADDRESS _____
Tel (Office) _____
Tel (Home) _____
Date of Birth _____

Postcode _____
To: The Equitable Life, FREEPOST WALKER STREET, AYLESBURY, HUNTS MK45 1BB
I would like more information on The Equitable With-Profits Bond ☐ ENBCJA

The Equitable Life
You profit from our principles

Dinosaur eggs for Easter: £225-£400 each. A couple of dozen are being offered for sale by Chris Martin, the London antiquities and natural history dealer. They come embedded in claret-coloured silk in charmingly naïf gift boxes that would look out of place in their native Henan province, North West China – either now or 75-85 million years ago.

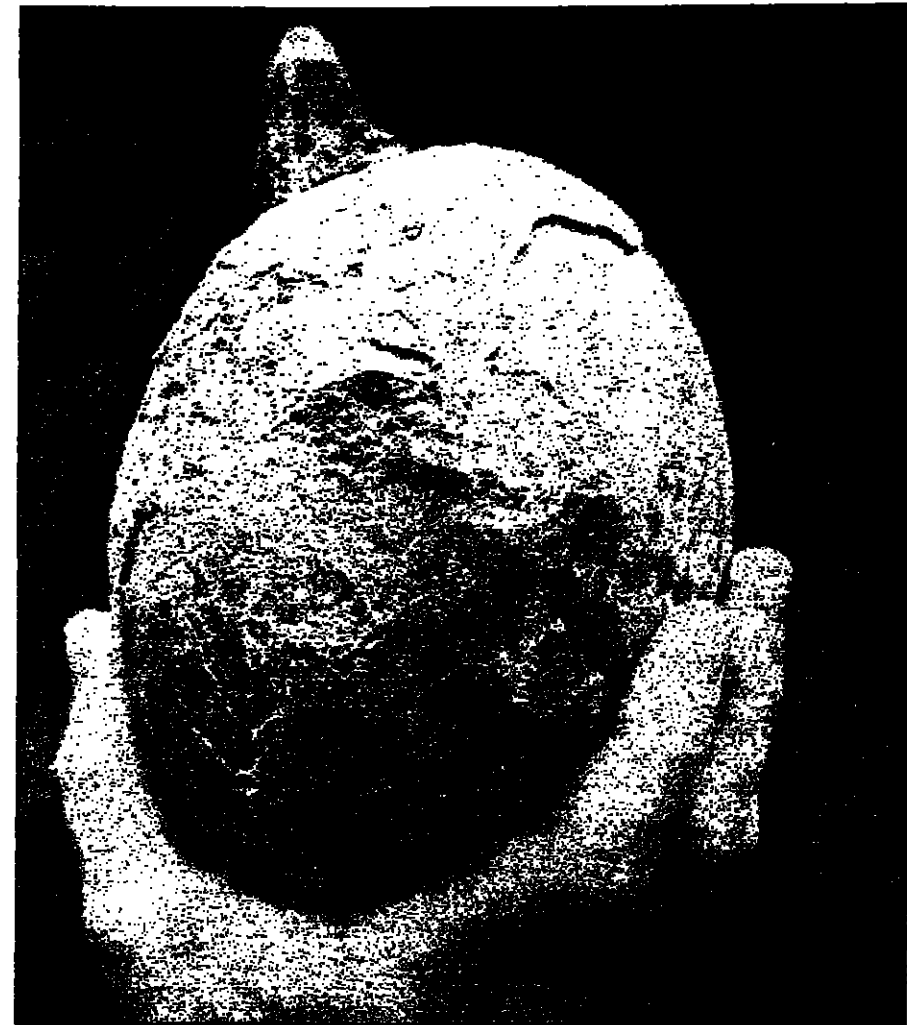
The market for fossilised dinosaur eggs has boomed and busted since they began being smuggled out of China via Hong Kong in their hundreds five years ago. Whether you buy now, at the bottom of the market, depends on whether you think the Chinese will increase their rarity by putting a stop to smuggling. The latest buzz, however, is that there are 10,000 dinosaur eggs waiting to be illegally shipped to the United States and Australia before Hong Kong is handed back to the Chinese on 30 June.

Peak prices coincided with *Jurassic Park* fever: £1,600 was paid at Bonhams in 1994 for the egg of a sauropod (plant-eating) dinosaur by Oliver Hoare, art dealer and confidant of Princess Diana. In the same auction, a nest of 10 sauropod eggs, embedded in heavy clay, fetched £46,200.

Fresh out of Hong Kong, eggs of the therizinosaur, a two-legged theropod (meat-eater) known as the scythe lizard because of its menacing two-foot claws, change hands for \$300, according to Terry Manning, the Leicester fossil dealer and researcher.

He had just returned from last week's big 10-day fair of fossil, mineral and gem dealers in Tucson, Arizona, where Chinese dealers from Hong Kong had whispered the latest on smuggling.

Dinosaur eggs, not found in the UK, are part of native antiquity in the US, so that is where the market is. Mr Manning has seen fine qual-



Dinosaur eggs for Easter: For sale at £225-£400 each

PHOTOGRAPH: NICOLA KURTZ

ity therizinosaur eggs offered by dealers at the fair for \$900 and fine quality sauropod eggs for \$1,000. Run-of-the-mill specimens were changing hands for \$150-\$800 – a higher price than a year or 18 months ago, when, after a rush of consignments from Hong Kong, eggs in average condition were at a rock-bottom \$50-\$100.

He scotched rumours that Chinese had been executed and imprisoned by the authorities for smuggling dinosaur eggs. They had in fact been executed and imprisoned by the army – "the biggest smuggler, a kind of mafia" – for refusing to co-operate with its illegal

egg smuggling. Mr Manning's ambition is to do a *Jurassic* – to use a computer to reconstruct dinosaur DNA from biological remains found in their unhatched eggs, then clone a living dinosaur by inserting the DNA into a bird embryo. He admits that the computer power needed is the equivalent of the total information on the Internet (where, incidentally, dinosaur eggs are for sale at \$800-\$1,200).

But the recent cloning of an adult animal – a sheep – has taken his project a micron or two out of the realms of science fiction.

In the past four years he has bought 1,600 fossilised

therizinosaur eggs, ranging in price from \$800 each for the first 250 to \$48 each for 50 inferior specimens from Japan. Out of the total, he has found only 15 that contain biological remains – bones and tiny teeth, proving, incidentally, that the embryo dinosaurs had cut a third set of teeth by the time they were ready to break out of the egg.

Each egg with a "commercially viable" embryo, he calculates, has cost him \$72,000. In an attempt to recoup costs, he offered two of them at Phillips New York in December, each with a reserve of \$125,000. They failed to sell. But a well-preserved therizinosaur

egg of his, without embryo, fetched \$3,737 in the same sale. Phillips's David Hirschowitz will sell only top-condition eggs (up to 95 per cent intact). He can get \$4,000 for a good sauropod egg that a dealer could get only \$800 for – proving that, in the US, some private buyers still think dinosaur eggs are rare.

Ironically, it is the expensive eggs with real embryo inside that are the least decorative. They are often found crushed. The "inflated" ones that still look like eggs – such as Mr Martin's Easter eggs – are the ones that have hatched. Minerals that drifted through the hole left by the hatching dinosaur preserve their shape.

Mr Martin's eggs have been identified as therizinosaur by the Natural History Museum. But some measure 8in by 5in, compared with the usual 3in by 2in for therizosaurs and some experts, such as Mr Manning, reckon they are more likely sauropod. They are 65 per cent intact, the remainder of what was once shell having been replaced by hard red Chinese clay.

Ironically, the fact that there is virtually no market for dinosaur eggs in this country makes them relatively hard to find. Bonhams no longer offers them. In fact, Bonhams auctioneer Philip Keith, still famous for his coup in getting a peak £46,200 for a clutch of 10, is heartily sick of the things. He values average-condition eggs in this country at £100-£300.

He says: "I could name 150 collectors and dealers in the US, the Far East and Europe who want to sell. Not a week goes by without my being offered some. I tell vendors that they are not rare and that nobody wants them, but they don't believe me. At the end of the day, they're just eggs, aren't they. I think they're boring."

Chris Martin: 85 The Vale, Southgate, London N14 6AT

Click on cameras

John Windsor's auction round-up

The year is weak: now is the time to buy Leica cameras, whether for use or as collectables. Up to 40 per cent of the money bid for cameras in London comes from Japan and the year's decreased buying power has prompted Christie's South Kensington to throttle back estimates by 10 per cent, especially at the top of the market.

Secondhand Leicas are not expensive. A couple of hundred pounds can buy one. At South Ken's camera sale on Thursday (2pm), a Leica IIIc of the early Forties is estimated at £200-£300.

The housing market is on the move, and so, therefore, are the more traditional modern British paintings. Bullish estimates at Sotheby's, Wednesday (10.30am), on Edward Seago, Dorothea Sharp and – a glimmer of more refined taste – Gwen John, whose watercolour of a young girl is est £4,000-£6,000. More modern Brits at South Ken, Friday (10.30am).

Countrywide auctions
Manchester: Domestic electrical appliances, including popcorn and bread makers, telephone answering machines, Thursday (11am) at 51a Broughton Lane. Auction International (0161-832 2400). Plymouth: Computers and peripherals at the Novatel, tomorrow (11am). South West Computer Auctions (01934-642437). Headcorn, Kent: A 1952 Rolls Bentley, a cabin cruiser, a Thirties model locomotive, among 1,000 lots at the Weald of Kent Golf Club, Monday (12 noon). Wealden Auction Galleries (01622-891568).

Fairs
London Autograph Fair, Chesterfield Hotel, Charles Street, Mayfair, West London, tomorrow (01483-232423). London International Watch Fair, Music Rooms, 26 Molton Lane, London W1 tomorrow (0171-499 0564).
Ardingly: Tuesday-Wednesday, IACF (01636-702326).
Further information about auctions and fairs: *Antiques Trade Gazette* and *Government Auction News* (fax information line 0336-423488).



John Windsor

the ultimate Tracking PEP?

NORWICH UNION'S GLOBAL TRACKING PEP

■ No initial charge

■ No exit charge¹

■ Annual charge of 0.9%

■ No extra charge for monthly savings

■ 25% invested internationally
75% invested in the UK

■ Monthly savings from only £50 per month

■ Lump sum investments from £1000

For full written details please call 0345 73 83 93 (local call rates), quoting the reference below, between 9am and 6pm, 7 days a week, or complete the coupon below in block capitals and return it (no stamp required) to:-

Norwich Union Portfolio Services Limited, FREEPOST ANG 4247, Norwich NR1 3BR.

Name _____ Ref: 11N08
Address _____
Postcode _____
Daytime tel no: _____ Evening tel no: _____

Data that you provide may be used by Norwich Union group companies, your financial adviser or other relevant organisations for marketing purposes such as market research and contacting you regarding your future insurance and investment needs.



No one protects more.

For your protection all telephone calls will be recorded. The value of and income from PEPs may fall and you may not get back the amount invested. Funds invested abroad may alter with exchange rate fluctuations. Information/advice will only relate to Norwich Union products. ¹Except the buying to selling spread of 0.5%.

INSURANCE INVESTMENTS HEALTHCARE PENSIONS

Norwich Union Portfolio Services Limited is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority. Regulated by IMRO

Thought for the day

This entitles

Name _____

Address _____

to a complimentary half hour consultation with an IFA.

You please: I think I'd like to know more about talking to an IFA. Please send me my information pack, the names of three local IFAs and a voucher for my half hour free consultation. I understand that no-one will call me as a result of filling in this coupon. The address is: IFA Promotion Limited, 17-19 Emery Road, Brixton, London SW9 5PL.

Name _____ Address _____ Postcode _____

See an IFA



هكذا من الأصل

narrower, straighter gas tail.
 Low power binoculars will
 afford a fine view. The darker
 your skies, the more tail you
 will see. A finding chart is
 hardly necessary since the
 comet is so conspicuous, but it

hang low over the northwest
 horizon as the evening sky
 darkens. By the end of March,
 early evening will be the better
 time to observe it.

Jaqueline Mitton



The big picture

JFK
Sun 9.30pm BBC2

Writing about Oliver Stone's marathon take on the assassination of President Kennedy, this paper's Adam Mars-Jones referred to Stone "compulsively fingering the stigmata of the martyred Kennedy". Here it is then, in slow-motion, flashback - any way you want it - the events of November 1963, with Kevin Costner (above) as New Orleans DA Jim Garrison, trying to get to the bottom of things. Factually shaky and carried away by its own rhetoric, but Stone has done little that is better.

Television preview

Recommended viewing this weekend
by Gerard Gilbert

You've got to admire the demographic acumen of the space debris in the imported TV disaster movie *Asteroid* (Sat ITV). The rock in question could have landed anywhere on the globe - Siberia, say, or the Indian Ocean - but it chose to impact smack on top of the American Midwest, scoring a bullseye on a hydro-electric dam to boot.

Asteroid is a chip off the old *Independence Day* block, except that the intergalactic threat is impersonal this time, and more credible. Ask a dinosaur. Michael Biehn, who played the hero in *Terminator*, runs around manfully evacuating Kansas City. Annabella Sciorra is the astronomer who told them so. It's all right, really, and a lot less monotonous than *Independence Day*.

It's not a bad night for science fiction, in fact. *Crime Traveller* (Sat BBC1) has Michael French (shifty ladies' man David Wicks from *EastEnders*) as a police detective who owns a novel weapon in the fight against crime - a rickety, home-made time machine, knocked up by the department's science officer (Chloe Annett), in her living room. This is a fabulous idea, delivered

like a Lew Grade ATV drama circa 1972. I don't know how deliberate this was, but the result is a hoot. Sue Johnston plays their boss, expostulating away at each crime scene, Michael Winner-style. The only doubt is with Michael French. Just as some TV actors don't transfer well to the big screen, I'm not sure French travels that well from soaps to the action genre. He acts better with his eyes than with his arms and legs.

After *The Real Holiday Show*, a real marriage show. *Love Life* (Sun C4) puts hidden cameras into the home of a couple whose marriage is going through the emotional equivalent of northern Greenland during a cold snap. Enter Dr Janet Reibstein and her five key-words for a happy relationship: "protection", "balance", "focus", "gratitude" and "pleasure". This week's little lesson concerns "protection", or "your partner is your unique ally". And there are examples of real-life happy marriages for us to study - so that we can recognise "protection" in its natural habitat. Uncertain partners might like to watch alone with their arms and legs.

Which brings us neatly to *Performance*, which begins a new run of filmed stage drama with the

Crime Traveller Sat 8.10pm BBC1
Performance: Company Sat 8.30pm BBC2
Asteroid Sat 9.10pm ITV
Love Life Sun 7.30pm C4
Omnibus Sun 10.20pm BBC1
The South Bank Show Sun 11pm ITV

Dommar Warehouse's 1996 version of Stephen Sondheim's *Company* (Sat BBC2). Amazingly, this is the first West End revival of this fabulous musical since it first appeared back in 1971. Apart from the stuff about smoking pot for the first time, Sondheim's witty take on the joys and pitfalls of being married/single hasn't dated in the slightest. In fact, in the case of Britain, it is probably more contemporary now than it was in the early 1970s.

The South Bank Show (Sun ITV) takes The Bee Gees back to their Mancunian roots and demonstrates that, like all great pop survivors (although association with *Saturday Night Fever* nearly killed them), they are first and foremost great song-writers. Omnia (Sun BBC1) has a tantalising portrait of the 88-year-old Count Basie, Klossowski de Rola, to give the painter Basie his real name. Basie is probably best known for his "enigmatic" portraits of young girls - enigmatic in the sense that the young girls are enraptured. Basie swears he is not, as he puts it, a follower of Nabokov. "The young-girl issue" as Basie puts it, comes to dominate the film. A pity.



The big match

Five Nations: England v France
Sat 2.25pm BBC1

Terrestrial viewers' last chance to watch this fixture (all of England's Twickenham games have been bought by BSkyB) and this is the one which will decide where the silverware goes this year. Phil the Glorifier may have called for a clasp-down on the pre-match festivities, but don't necessarily expect the cavalry to last on the pitch. The Tricolours are without all their first-choice players: three-quarter line, but welcome back Alain Penaud (above), captain of European club champions, Brive.

Saturday television and radio

BBC 1

7.00 *Harry and the Hendersons* (R) (S1/T) (1840634).
7.25 *News, Weather* (3282371).
7.30 *Children's BBC*. Felix the Cat (3898994). 7.45 *Phantom* (2040) (6216888). 8.10 *The Real Adventures of Jonny Quest* (5008468). 8.35 *The Flintstones* (5277191).
9.00 *Live and Kicking*. Record company boss Paul Burger is in the Hot Seat, Ant and Dec and Eternal perform their latest singles, and Susan Tully talks about Red Nose Day '97 (S) (78008975).
12.12 *Weather* (7637826).
12.15 *Grandstand*. Football Focus (2353333). 1.00 *News* (81975517). 1.05 *Racing from Newbury*: the 1.15 race (47863536). 1.25 *Shilling*: the woman's downhill from Nagano, Japan (59691604). 1.40 *Racing from Newbury*: the 1.45 race (83745062). 1.55 *Rugby Union* (83768913). 2.10 *Racing from Newbury*: the 2.15 race (36396826). 2.25 *Rugby Union* (England v France: Live coverage from Twickenham (kick-off 3pm). See *The big match*, above (35667246). 4.40 *Final Score* (3693536). 5.00 *Rugby Union*: extended highlights of Scotland v Ireland (6913).
5.30 *News, Weather* (7) (383975).
5.40 *Regional News* and *Weather* (598246).
5.45 *David's Diary* (R) (7257911).
6.15 *The New Adventures of Superman* (R) (870623).
7.00 *Noel's House Party*. The bearded prankster puts one over on Gordon Burns, while the Spice Girls and Ronnie Corbett drop by (S) (626159).
7.50 *The National Lottery Live*. With Wet Wet Wet and Joanne May (S) (136975).
8.10 *Crime Traveller*. See *Preview*, above (S) (7) (796178).
9.00 *News and Sport, Weather* (7) (344325).
9.20 *Dancing in the Dark* (Bill Corcoran 1995 US). One woman's fight against the lecherous advances of her father-in-law, a pillar of the Texas legal community (TV) (7264826).
10.50 *Match of the Day*. Newcastle United v Southampton is the main event (S) (8525389).
12.00 *Chalk*. School-sitting teacher sitcom (R) (23314).
12.30 *Top of the Pops*. From yesterday, featuring the Spice Girls, Sash!, Republica, Cathy Dennis and Bush (R) (S) (77647).
1.00 *Silver Dream Racer* (David Wicks 1980 UK). A London garage mechanic dreams of being a top motorcycle racer. When his brother is killed in an accident, he inherits the motorcycle his brother had been working on, and sets out to prove himself on the racing circuit (593802).
2.45 *Weather* (344073). To 2.50pm.
REGIONS. 2.25 *Rugby Union*: Scotland v Ireland. 4.35 *England v France*. 9.20 *Mind the Gap*. 9.50 *Sportsweek* - Match of the Day. 11.00 *Football*: Dancing in the Dark. 12.30 *Chalk*. 1.00 *Top of the Pops*. 10.20pm *Satellite City*.

BBC 2

6.20 *Open University: Disappearing Childhood* (7555642). 6.45 *Earthquakes: Seismology at Work* (9356401). 7.10 *Using TV* (9199352).
8.00 *Open University: The World of the Future* (9199352).
10.30 *The Static Nomad* (R) (5669246).
10.35 *Carrier's Caribbean*. Coolery (R) (7320807).
10.50 *The Sky at Night*. Quasars explained (2624197).
11.10 *Bringing Up Baby* (Howard Hawks 1938 US). A triple bill of Howard Hawks movies begins with his beautifully judged screwball comedy, which has paleontologist Cary Grant losing a vital dinosaur bone to heiress Katharine Hepburn's dog but ending up with the best set of bones going - Hepburn's (TV) (82979913).
12.50 *Film 97 with Barry Norman* (S) (6931897).
1.20 *Sergeant York* (Howard Hawks 1941 US). The second in the Hawks triple bill is relatively conventional for the director - and stars Gary Cooper as the true-life pacifist hero who becomes a hero of the Great War (19726913).
3.25 *Howard Hawks: American Artist*. Documentary about Hawks (S) (1166401).
4.25 *Rio Lobo* (Howard Hawks 1970 US). The Hawks trilogy rounds off with the director's final film, a sort of weary joke about *Rio Bravo* and *El Dorado*, with lots of jokes about the size of John Wayne's girl and some lachrymose business about Varian's traitors (53383159).
6.15 *Crufts 97* (S) (729642).
6.45 *News and Sport, Weather* (7) (294178).
7.00 *Correspondent*. Emily Buchanan reports on a eugenics programme run by the Canadian province of Alberta until 1972. Plus, Nigerian writer Donu Kogbara visits Uganda to learn about a campaign to abolish female circumcision (S) (721178).
7.45 *Branded: Levi's Blue Dreams*. Levi jeans were created for Californian gold miners 145 years ago. The 501 brand is a low-tech product consisting of one-and-a-half-quarter yards of denim, five buttons and five rivets, and the mark-up is in the order of 40 per cent. Enter the marketing man (510082).
8.25 *Close Up* (R) (728265).
8.30 *Performance: Company*. See *Preview*, above (S) (7) (75419975).
10.50 *Harrison Bergeron* (Bruce Pittman 1995 Can.). TV movie based on a story by Kurt Vonnegut. In 2053, anti-intellectual forces have inherited the earth and everyone must wear an electronic headband which scrambles intelligent thought. What's wrong with the good old *Sunt* (32274333).
12.25 *Windows on the World*. Film about Edward Vasek, the revolutionary French composer (S) (8815192).
1.25 *Global Village*. Then *Weather* (6634622).
REGIONS. 1.20 *Howard Hawks: American Artist*. 2.15 *Conference 97*. 3.45 *Film*: The North Star. 5.30 *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. 11.10 *Howard Hawks: American Artist*. 12.10 *Film*: Rio Lobo. 2.00 *Wales Liberal Democrats Party Conference*. 4.00 *Film*: Sergeant York.

ITV/London

6.00 *GMTV*: 6.00 *News*. 6.10 *Mole in the Hole*. 6.30 *Professor Bubble*. 6.50 *Bug Alert*. 7.15 *Dragonfly*. 7.45 *Disney's Wake Up in the Wild*.
9.25 *Scratchy and Co.* Alisha's Attic, impressionist Earl Grey and the cast of children's TV show *Scratchy* are the guests. Plus, a location report on Peter Andre's new video, shot in Los Angeles (S) (24495994).
11.30 *The Chart Show* (S) (38888).
12.30 *Flash*. A look at the life and work of leading young hat designer, Philip Treacy (36352).
1.00 *News, Weather* (7) (81993913).
1.05 *London Weekend Today* (7) (81992284).
1.10 *Champions' League Special*. Previews of this week's quarter-finals, including the Manchester United match against FC Porto (70283438).
1.40 *Racing Show*. Fly-on coverage of the documentary on the preparation and launch of the Jackie Stewart Formula One team (1385197).
2.40 *Stuntmasters* (R) (383739).
3.10 *Billie*. Please Turn Over (Gerald Thomas 1960 UK). An almost quintessential title for a Gerald Thomas comedy is the man who helmed virtually all the Carry On movies, which teenager Jean Kent causes scandal in suburban publishing a racy novel involving her neighbours. Ted Ray, Leslie Phillips, Charles Hawtrey and Joan Sims co-star (77013265).
4.45 *News, Sports Results, Weather* (7) (3687975).
5.05 *London Weekend Tonight* (7) (1850197).
5.20 *Clueless*. Ex-*Baywatch* regular Nicole Eggert guest-stars (S) (8018515).
5.45 *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*. Thoroughly old-fashioned sitcom, with echoes of *Bewitched* and more clearly, *The Munsters*. It's the winter break and Aunt Zelda and Hilda take Sabrina to Mars for a family skiing vacation (S) (856246).
6.10 *You Bet!* Paul Ross, Malandra Burrows and Gary Bushell place bets as a basketball player from the London Leopards tries to score points blindfold, a Sheffield diving team jumps through hoops and an *Emmerdale* fanatic attempts to identify clips from just four seconds of dialogue (S) (265642).
7.10 *Blind Date* (S) (355159).
8.10 *It'll Be Alright on the Night*. With the avuncular (R) (726523).
9.10 *Asteroid*. See *Preview*, above (S) (7) (43496178).
10.55 *News, Weather, Lottery Results* (7) (821333).
11.10 *Deliver Them from Evil: The Telling of Alta* (1993). Fact-based TV movie in which a religious fanatic and father of eight (a thoroughly unlikely Harry Hamlin) lays siege to the Utah hospital where his wife was sterilised (67420).
12.55 *Head On* (Michael Grant 1980 Can.). Sally Kellerman and Stephen Lack play two drivers involved in a head-on car crash. They swap legal wris they kiss (4499227).
2.25 *Elvis* (1956) (5926227).
3.15 *Club Nation* (R) (2807444).
4.10 *ITV Sport Classics* (R) (41271579).
4.35 *Club Vibe* (S) (34192299).
4.40 *Cosch*. Double episode of the sitcom about an American football coach (S) (7239956).
5.30 *News* (19111). To 6.00am.

Channel 4

6.00 *Sesame Street* (R) (69352).
7.00 *Dumb and Dumber* (S) (27555).
7.25 *Dennis* (R) (3971604).
7.45 *First Edition* (R) (S) (3976159).
9.00 *Transworld Sport* (R) (24352).
9.00 *Morning Line* (S) (47569).
10.00 *Gazzetta Football* (S) (62866).
11.00 *NBA 24/7*. Houston Rockets v Los Angeles Lakers (S) (15710).
12.00 *Missing Parents*. Short film drama about an obnoxious teenager who returns home to find his parents have run away (R) (2360623).
12.35 *Racing from Doncaster*. Jim McGrath introduces the 12.50 Light Infantry Plate, 1.25 Mitsubishi Shogun Trophy, 2.00 Velia Pardubicka Grimthorpe Handicap Chase and the 2.30 Air Power Products Handicap Hurdle (S) (45439575).
2.50 *Pete Smith Specialities* (2905913).
3.00 *Hans Christian Andersen* (Charles Vidor 1952 US). Siopic bearing very little resemblance to the true story of the Danish story creator. Danny Kaye takes the title role (7) (50248642).
5.05 *Brookside Omnibus* (S) (2217604).
6.30 *Right to Reply* (S) (7).
7.00 *A Week in Politics*. With Vincent Hanna and Andrew Rawnsley (S) (4642).
8.00 *Fragile Kingdoms*. Focus on a trio of American children living an extraordinary life deep in the heart of the forest of Belize, where their parents are dedicating their lives to studying forest animals and plants with the help of the Bambuti pygmies (7) (6802).
9.00 *Last Chance Lottery*. Show celebrating life's losers, which is kind of ironic (S) (6046).
10.00 *Eurotrash*. Italian porn star Jessica Rizzo and her new perfume, Erotika, Paco Rabanne and his apocalyptic visions, and the reasons for *Baywatch* star David Hasselhoff's popularity in Germany. It's his singing, apparently (R) (81951).
10.30 *The Show*. Another deconstructed chat show with Bob Mills and the backstage team (S) (6820951).
11.35 *Hill Street Blues*. The seminal 1980s Boston cop series (S) (5034208).
12.35 *The Client*. Drama series set in the American law courts, based on John Grisham's best-selling thriller. Reggie defends a jailed schoolgirl who is accused of killing her date (S) (5358647).
1.30 *The Girlie Show*. From last night, with guests Patsy Palmer (Bianca from *EastEnders*) and former *Play* 3 model Sam Fox (S) (24686).
2.00 *Ricki Lake*. Model who wants to declare on television that they have had enough of their ex-lovers in the hope that the spurned partners will finally get the message (R) (S) (8587647).
2.45 *Benji and Butch*. The Pugs, Busta and Benji are among the artists (S) (5034208).
3.10 *Bliss This House* (R) (S) (3455208).
4.10 *ITV Night Special: The English Patient*. The making of (R) (S) (8392463).
5.05 *The Best Specials* (S) (1005579). To 6.20am.

ITV/Regions

REGIA
As London except: 12.30pm *Movies, Games and Videos* (36352). 1.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.40 *World of Wonder* (2667401). 2.15 *Baywatch* (2526994). 3.05 *Film*: Carry On Jack (52921642). 3.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 5.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 6.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 7.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 8.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 9.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 10.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 11.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 12.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 1.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 2.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.40 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.45 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.50 *Anglia News* (81992284). 3.55 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.00 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.05 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.10 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.15 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.20 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.25 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.30 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.35 *Anglia News* (81992284). 4.40 *Ang*

obituaries / gazette

Sir Duncan McDonald

As managing director of Bruce Peebles, power station equipment engineers, as chief executive of Reyrolle Parsons, switch-gear engineers, and as chairman of Northern Engineering Industries, Duncan McDonald had more in common with his heroes Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806-59), Daniel Gooch (1816-89) and the great Victorian engineer-managers, than modern industrialist-accountant managers who work in terror of stockmarket analysts and the havoc they may cause. It is perhaps an indication of how industrial perceptions have changed in the last quarter of a century, not necessarily for the better, that McDonald told me proudly: "I have raised the number of people working for us in our companies to nearly 35,000." He would not like to have said: "I have cut the workforce, becoming more cost-effective and have done x per cent better than last year."

What McDonald cared about, explained Hamish Morrison, former chief executive of the Scottish Council of Development and Industry, was giving people worthwhile engineering work which would give them job satisfaction and be useful to society and Britain. I never did discern what McDonald's personal politics were, but frequently sitting beside him on the Edinburgh-London plane I came to know that he had an obsessive horror of human waste in the shape of unemployment

and a demonic energy in trying to do something about it by providing skilled jobs.

He was a passionate power engineer who believed, above all else, that the prime mover in the power station, the turbine, had to be perfect. If not there would be many other problems. He motivated people, who recognised that he knew where every proverbial nut and bolt should go in the burning instrument. I saw at first hand how he was admired on account of his engineering expertise and an ability to understand the complexities of any task being carried out by his employees. On many occasions, I went round the Bruce Peebles plant at Broxburn, West Lothian with him as the local MP and sensed the respect in which he was held by shop-floor and junior managers alike. Shirt-sleeved and immaculate, he made a point of knowing everyone in the factory by name. The result was that when the transformer industry was undergoing periods of traumatic change in the 1960s and 1970s, he was given co-operation by the Amalgamated Engineering Union. Soft-spoken, with a twinkle in his eye, McDonald's philosophy was that huge problems, technical and human, were there to be addressed quietly, unostentatiously and with sustained intelligence.

He was born within sight of the Forth Bridge, the son of a cable jointer with the then South of Scotland Electricity Board, now Scottish Power,

During his childhood in Inverkeithing he had been inspired by Sir John Fowler's wonderful cantilevers. Whenever I saw him he would say to me as the MP for South Queensferry, "Are you looking after my bridge properly? Are you sure that rust, which never sleeps, is not getting a hold?"

He was an inspiration to those of us who campaign for properly maintaining the greatest engineering monument to the 19th century. It was a great pleasure to him when the company of Sir William Arrol was added to his Northern Engineering conglomerate since Arrol had been the structural engineers responsible in the 1890s for the Forth Bridge's construction.

In the early years of the Second World War he obtained first class honours in electrical engineering at Edinburgh University, and went on reserved occupation as a graduate apprentice to British Thompson Houston at Rugby. When the war ended, BTH earmarked him for research and development in transformer design which suited his talents perfectly.

In 1954 he transferred to Bruce Peebles Industries and became their chief transformer designer from 1954 to 1959, when he was promoted as chief engineer. In 1962 he became managing director, and in 1974 chairman and chief executive, both of Bruce Peebles and of Reyrolle Parsons. Bob Smith, Bruce Peebles' quality and safety manager, who worked with him from 1954, described McDonald as "superb during the difficult mergers of Bruce Peebles, Reyrolle Parsons and Clark Chapman. He respected the identity of Bruce Peebles and kept it as a core large transformer plant, thereby helping the morale of the workforce. Equally the managers of Reyrolle Parsons and Clark Chapman were pleased at the dignity he accorded them."

His relations with employees were further enhanced by the fact that he was a keen fly fisherman and a regular member of the Bruce Peebles fishing club. Many good relationships were formed on the banks of Scottish rivers at the expense of trout.

He was particularly interested in developments for nuclear power-stations and was elected to the board of the National Nuclear Corporation. Truth to tell, he was always ambiguous about nuclear power at a time when great efficiencies were being made in the winning of fossil fuel. He was impressed by the advanced gas-cooled reactors and praised Dr Robin Jeffery's engineering feat in the creation of Torness. He was less enthusiastic about both the Magnox stations and the problems of Dungeness B and elsewhere among the next generation of nuclear power-stations.

For ten years (1983-92) McDonald was on the board of Scottish Accident, whose chairman, the Earl of Airrie, told me



McDonald welcomes Margaret Thatcher to Northern Engineering Industries' plant in the 1980s

Photograph: Newcastle Journal

yesterday: "He was much loved not only on the board but by managers and their colleagues. He had a wonderful way with people. He put his points in a way that was most acceptable."

McDonald was a decentraliser by conviction and in his latter years felt that running a great company out of Newcastle put him at a disadvantage with those of his competitors whose headquarters could intermingle with government in London. He felt hurt that the metropolitan stock market was never lent to Northern Engineering Industries and suspected that they felt that

they were some kind of sleepy set-up in the outback rather than a great international company at the cutting edge of technology - in the 1980s they had a £700m turnover. He always extolled the virtues of the Scottish Office in Edinburgh with whom he had had exceptionally cordial relations. It was characteristic of McDonald that he made time to return from Newcastle to Edinburgh for meetings of the Scottish Council of Development and Industry. Though it was common knowledge that he had been offered the chair of the Scottish Council, it was also characteris-

tic that he resisted a strong personal temptation on the grounds that the chairman of this prestigious body ought to be based in Scotland and not in the North of England.

Duncan McDonald was a man of international vision and travelled the world in search of orders to keep his employees in work. In February 1985, in the company of such heavyweights as Lord King of British Airways, Richard Giordano of British Oxygen and Denis Jackson of Rolls-Royce he was one of ten prominent industrialists who went under the leadership of

Lord Young, then Mrs Thatcher's Minister without Portfolio, to China. He was the first man I knew to emphasise the potential of the Pacific Rim. His hallmark was vision.

Tom Dalyell

Duncan McDonald, turbine engineer and industrialist: born Inverkeithing, Fife 20 September 1921; CBE 1976; Group Managing Director, Northern Engineering Industries 1977-80; Chairman 1980-86; Rt 1983; married 1955 Jane Guckian (three sons, one daughter); died Edinburgh 23 February 1997.

T. H. Bridgewater

Tony Bridgewater encompassed in his own life and career the development of British television as we now know it.

Tony, or Bridgie as many BBC colleagues called him (not even his mother used his given name of Thornton), started working with John Logie Baird in 1928. He was involved with Baird's early experimental television transmissions of the 30-line mechanical system which went from his studio in Covent Garden via Savoy Hill to a BBC medium-wave radio transmitter on the roof of Selfridges.

They had to take place after the BBC's late-night dance music had closed down. Because there was only one transmitter available the crude flickering pictures and the sound could not be synchronised and had to be radiated in alternating two-minute bursts. In 1932 when the BBC took over full responsibility for these experimental programmes Bridgewater, with

two other television engineers, joined the Corporation. The operation moved into the newly built Broadcasting House and Bridgewater often announced the programmes himself from a studio shared with Henry Hall's dance band.

In 1936 he led the studio team at Alexandra Palace when the world's first public service of high-definition television opened. Baird's mechanical system, by then on 240 lines, alternated weekly with the 405-line electronic system developed by EMI to establish which was the better. In a few months EMI was the clear winner. The mechanical system was dropped, to Baird's bitter disappointment.

Bridgewater supervised, and personally directed, the first BBC television outside broadcast: the 1937 Coronation procession of King George VI as it passed Hyde Park Corner. The brand-new mobile control room had been delivered from



Bridgewater: experiments with John Logie Baird. Photograph: BBC

EMI only days beforehand. There was momentary panic when the equipment went dead just as the Coronation procession approached. There was no time for anything but that classic television remedy, a strong bang from the fist of one of the EMI engineers standing by. Fortunately it worked, and the King's smile to the close-up

camera made the next day's press headlines.

Bridgewater was in charge of the engineering aspects of many BBC outside broadcasts remembered by older viewers with admiration: the 1948 Olympic Games, the first television programme from across the Channel, the Coronation of the Queen, her first Christmas television broadcast from Sandringham, the immensely complicated and moving coverage of Sir Winston Churchill's funeral and countless other ceremonies and great sporting events. He organised television broadcasts from submarines below the surface of the sea and from aeroplanes above the surface of the land.

Bridgewater was kind, considerate and courteous. One of his outstanding qualities as an engineer was his ability to explain electronic complexities in terms readily understood by non-engineers. I was particularly grateful for this when we were

together involved in planning the introduction of BBC2 with its formidable problems of conversion to 625-line UHF transmission standards and as well as to colour capability. Bill Cotton used to say that before coming to work at White City he not only didn't understand television, he didn't even understand electricity, until Bridgie explained both to him.

Bridgewater retired from the BBC in 1968, having been the Chief Television Engineer for the previous six years. His work for television, however, was far from over. He lectured and wrote articles for various technical journals and also contributed a scholarly monograph on A.A. Campbell Swinton, a leading pioneer of electronic, as opposed to mechanical, television. This was published by the Royal Television Society, to which he gave outstanding service over a great period. He had been elected a Fellow of the Television Society in 1930, long before it became

Royal. He was its Honorary Treasurer for 20 years, its Chairman of Council, and the recipient of its Gold Medal.

In latter years Bridgewater's long and unique personal experience of the development of television made him a particularly valuable founder member of the KTS History and Archives Specialist Group. He remembered all sorts of fascinating and sometimes horrifying details. One day when we were discussing the impermanence of recorded television material he casually mentioned that in the very early days of videotape he happened to know of at least one pre-recorded play and one pre-recorded opera which had been accidentally wiped before transmission.

Tony Bridgewater's interest in broadcasting began as a schoolboy in Canada where his family was temporarily living. He constructed first a crystal set, and then a better one with valves, and was thrilled to be

able to pick up signals from the United States. On return to England he was trained in wireless telegraphy and at the age of 18 he went to sea as a wireless operator. He then worked for the Post Office on high power transmitters including those occasionally used for broadcasting to the Dominions, as they then were.

He read the technical journals avidly, and learnt of Baird's television experiments. In 1928 he managed to get an introduction to the Scottish inventor, who was beginning to expand from a one-man business. Baird engaged him and within weeks he was involved with Baird's first demonstration of recognisable, if very crude, colour television to the British Association, meeting that year in Glasgow.

On 1 September 1930 Alexandra Palace abruptly had to cease transmitting television, for defence reasons. Bridgewater joined the RAF and worked on radar, for which he was men-

tioned in dispatches. On demobilisation, with the rank of Squadron Leader, he rejoined the BBC to help restart television in time for the Victory Parade in June 1946.

Tony Bridgewater's own considerable scholarship came, he used to say, from association with a well-educated wife. He married Jean Bartlett in 1934 and they had one son, Anthony. She died on 18 September 1985, a year after they had celebrated their golden wedding. In 1993, shortly after his 85th birthday, he was made a Doctor of Bradford University in recognition of his services to television.

Leonard Miall

Thornton Howard Bridgewater, television engineer: born 1 June 1908; engineer in charge of outside broadcasts, BBC Television 1946-62; Chief Engineer 1962-68; CBE 1965; married 1934 Jean Bartlett (died 1985; one son); died 28 February 1997.

Isabelle Lucas

A prolific stage actress during a career that spanned 30 years of West End musicals such as *Gone With the Wind* and the original National Theatre production of Peter Nichols's acerbic comedy *The National Health*, Isabelle Lucas won more widespread recognition on television in the Seventies, as Norman Beaton's wife in *The Forsytes*. Britain's first all-black situation comedy, Mure recently, she appeared in the all-female soap opera *EastEnders* as the disapproving mother of black lesbian hairdresser Della Alexander.

Born in Canada in 1927, she

was the daughter of a chef from Barbados who worked on the Canadian Pacific Railway. Lucas acted in amateur productions as a teenager in Toronto before moving to London in 1954 to train as a singer. The following year she made her West End stage debut in the event *The Jazz Train* at the Piccadilly Theatre, a production that also gave Bertie Reading one of her early successes.

Lucas went on to carve out a distinguished musical career that included appearances alongside Elisabeth Welch and Millicent Martin in *The Crooked Mile* (1959), and as

Barbra Streisand's maid, Emma, in *Funny Girl* and Mammy in Harold Fielding's acclaimed production of *Gone With the Wind* (1972). Her last stage musical role was alongside the vaudeville star Jack Gifford in *Look to the Rainbow* (1985), but the actress' other West End roles included appearances in the straight play *The Genius and the Goddess* (adapted from an Aldous Huxley novel, 1962) and the Neil Simon comedy *The Sunshine Boys* (1975).

Other landmarks in Lucas's stage career included playing the first black Martha in Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia*

Woolf? at the Connaught Theatre, Worthing, and her first appearance with Norman Beaton, in the musical *Bakerloo to Paradise* (1969), which failed to make an impact and did not reach the West End. With the National Theatre she acted in George Bernard Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* (alongside Derek Jacobi, 1969) and the world premiere of *The National Health* (1969), both at the Old Vic, as well as *Cyrano* (Cambridge Theatre, 1970) and *Tiger* (New Theatre, 1971), with Norman Beaton and Maureen Lipman.

When she was cast as the Leader of the Bacchantes in the

National Theatre production of *The Bacchae*, Lucas objected to Sir Peter Hall's insistence that all the female characters should appear nude and won a partial victory by taking to the stage carefully draped. She also acted in *Flourie in Trinidad* (Donmar Warehouse, 1988), Mustapha Matura's black version of Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*, and the Nurse in Dame Judi Dench's production of *Romeo and Julia* (Open Air Theatre, Regent's Park, 1993), her final stage performance.

Her few feature films included *Miracle in Soho* (starring John Gielgud, 1957) and *Out-*

land (alongside Sean Connery, 1981), but it was as Pearl Foster in two series of *The Forsytes* (1976-77) on television that Lucas gained screen popularity. She and the celebrated actor Norman Beaton, as her husband Samuel, played the parents of a South London immigrant family. Among those playing their three children were the comedian Lenny Henry and the actress Sharon Roaia.

Lucas also played "bald, black, lesbian mother" Velma in the sitcom *Agony* (1979); Pearl, one of the staff at Ashvale Advertisers, in two series of *My*

Husband and I (1987-88); Gertrude in the children's series *Bluebirds*, starring Barbara Windsor, two characters in *EastEnders* - a district nurse, 1985, and nine years later Alice Alexander, who found it difficult to come to terms with her daughter Della's revelation that she was gay - and an old flame of the Peckham barber, Desmond in the Channel 4 sitcom *Desmond's* (reuniting her with Norman Beaton). She also made appearances in the television film *A Caribbean Mystery* (1983) and the mini-series *Elis Island* (1984).

Anthony Hayward



Lucas: career in musicals

Isabelle Harriet Lucas, actress: born Toronto, Canada 5 December 1927; married 1957 Maurice Jennings; died Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey 24 February 1997.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

CASEY: On 21 February, to Carol Lawson, wife of Adrian Case, a daughter, Charlotte Jane Lawson Case.

DEATHS

CHANG: Gerry Yau Cho, born 30 October 1901 in Hong Kong, passed away 13 February 1997, he is survived by his loving family, Pauline, and his loving family in Vancouver, BC, Canada. Private services will be held.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, please telephone 0171-293 2012 or fax to 0171-293 2010. Charges are £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

TODAY: Prince Edward, President, attends a screening of *A Journey to a Letter* and the *Geographical History of the Children's Film Unit* at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts, London W1; and opens the Thames-Film Studios, Hampton Wick, Surrey. The Princess Royal, Patron, Social Rugby Union, attends the Scotland-Ireland International Match at Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh. The Duke of Kent, Patron, the South Bank Foundation, attends a concert by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, at the Royal Festival Hall, London SE1.

Changing of the Guard

TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. TOMORROW: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 10am. F Company Scout Guards mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am. Band provided by the Coldstream Guards.

Marriages

Mr C. G. O'Farrell and Miss N. C. Mayersberg. The marriage took place on Friday 28 February at St James Norland Church, St James's Gardens, London W11, between Charles O'Farrell, eldest son of Mr and Mrs George O'Farrell, of Wamberal, New South Wales, and Natasha Mayersberg, daughter of Mr and Mrs Paul Mayersberg, of Chelsea, London. The bride was given in marriage by her father.

Birthdays

TODAY: Mr Harry Belafonte, actor and entertainer, 70; Mr David Broome, show jumper, 57; Mr Douglas Burn, founder, All-England Jumping Course, Hickstead, 69; Mr Nigel Cowley, cricketer, 40; Mr Roger Daltrey, singer and actor, 53; Mr Andrew Faulstich, actor and MP, 74; Sir Allan Green QC, former Director of Public Prosecutions, 62; Air Chief Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief Allied Forces, Central Europe, 79; Mr Martyn Jones MP, 50; Sir Michael Kerr, (former Lord Justice of Appeal, 70; Professor James Lister, paediatrician, 74; Mr Mike Read, disc jockey, 40; Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson, former director of the WRNS, 88; Mr David Scott Cooper, solo yachtsman, 55; Mark Todd, athlete, 41; Maj-Gen Philip Tower, former Commandant, Royal Military Academy, 80; Mr Brian Wallis, golfer, 57; Sir Gerald Wharm, chief executive, Royal Television plc and Vodafone Group, 70.

TOMORROW: Ms Pat Arrowsmith, peace campaigner, 67; Miss Margaret Barber, ballerina, 50; Mr Harry Blech, founder of the London Mozart Players, 87; Lady Moya Browne, former superintendent, St John Ambulance Brigade, 79; Sir Leonard Kinsella, farmer and for-

mer chairman, Eaton Ltd, 83; Rear-Admiral Sir Sir John Dutton, former Director of the Naval Education Service, 87; Lord Elton, former government minister, 67; Mr John Gardner, composer, 80; Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, former president of the Soviet Union, 66; Sir Donald Gossling, joint chairman, National Car Parks Ltd, 68; Mr Ronald Green, former chairman, Meyer International, 77; Lord Howe of Troon, engineer, publisher and journalist, 73; Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, 74; Dame Naomi Jaynes, yachtswoman, 48; Mr Nicholas Jarrold, ambassador to Latvia, 51; Miss Jennifer Jones, actress, 78; Sir John Manduell, composer, and former Principal, Royal Northern College of Music, 69; Mr Hugh Monro, Headmaster, Clifton College, 47; Mr Robert Simpson, composer, 76; Mr John Tusa, managing director, Barbican Centre, 61; Mr John Peter Rhys Williams, rugby player and surgeon, 48; Mr Ian Woosnam, golfer, 39.

Anniversaries

TODAY: Births: Frédéric-François Chopin, composer, 1810; Lytton Giles Strachey, author and biographer, 1880; Alton Glenn Miller, bandleader, 1904; Deafness Thomas Campion, poet and composer, 1620; Mack Gordon (Morris Gittler), lyricist, 1909; Jackie Coogan, actor, 1904. On this day 1,500 French Huguenots were massacred at Vassy, 1562; the Spectator was first published, 1711; slavery was abolished by Pennsylvania, the first US state to do so, 1780. Today is the Feast Day of St Aubin or Abbanus of Angers, St David or Dewi, St Felix III, Pope, St Rudesean or Rosendo and St Swithbert.

TOMORROW: Births: Sir Thomas Bodley, founder of the Bodleian Library, 1545; Bodrich Smetana, com-

poser, 1824; Kurt Julian Weill, composer, 1900; Deshaun John Wesley, founder of Methodism, 1791; David Herbert Lawrence, novelist, 1930; Howard Carter, painter and Egyptologist, 1899. On this day: an attempt was made by Robert Maclean to assassinate Queen Victoria, 1882; the French prototype Comanche made its first test flight, 1969; Tomerrow is the Feast Day of St Chad or Cædca, St Joan of Brittany and The Martyrs under the Lombards.

Lectures

TODAY: Victoria and Albert Museum: Gareth Williams, "The Frank Lloyd Wright Room", 2.30pm. Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "Corinths in Context (I)", 1pm. British Museum: Hilary Williams, "Thorvaldsen in Rome 1797-1838: the Scandinavian Canon?", 1.15pm. TOMORROW: Tate Gallery: Sarah O'Brien Twiligh, "Commenlate: Luciano Fabro", 4pm.

Lunches

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Mr Malcolm Rifkind QC MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, held a luncheon yesterday at 1 Carlton Gardens, London SW1, in honour of Mr Yevgeny Primakov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Dinners

St David's Day: London Welsh Celebration. Sir John Meurig Thomas FRS was the guest of honour at the 94th St David's Day Celebration Banquet held yesterday evening at the Savoy Hotel, London W1. Mr Alun Thomas presided and spoke.

Putting noble ideals into ancient religions

faith & treason

Christians have been persecuting Jews for 2,000 years, which makes Dr Jonathan Sacks's recent praise for a "Judeo-Christian tradition" all the more puzzling. What exactly is it? asks Andrew Brown.

The art of propaganda lies in nouns, not verbs. Once you have said that your opponent is a heretic, a bigot, or a happy-clappy, it is irrelevant what they do. Their character is indelibly stamped. And the same principle applies to praise: there are certain standards which function both as benchmarks for good behaviour and as rallying flags in a struggle with the forces of darkness; and one of the most pernicious of these is the Judeo-Christian tradition.

It made its most recent appearance in Dr Jonathan Sacks's articles plugging a forthcoming book earlier this week in what the *Daily Telegraph* used to call "another newspaper". He finished with a ringing endorsement of "the Judeo-Christian tradition, predicated on the sanctity of life, the priority of right over might, and the imperatives of justice and compassion for the vulnerable and disenfranchised, [which] has survived for almost 4,000 years, while the great empires which persecuted its adherents have crumbled and vanished".

Seldom can so much nonsense have been summoned in support of a noble ideal. What exactly is this Judeo-Christian tradition? There is undoubtedly an Abrahamic tradition: a line of descent in three of the world's great religions from the Old Testament. Islam, Christianity and Judaism all acknowledge a common descent from the myths of Abraham, and all pay allegiance to the "Ten Commandments". This has not prevented any of these religions from persecuting the others when they had the chance. On the contrary, the common descent of Judaism and Christianity is integral to the history of Christian anti-Semitism.

As far as I know, the idea of a specifically "Judeo-Christian" branch is an im-

port from America, where it has only really become popular in the last 50 years. It would have made very little sense to speak of this tradition before the Holocaust, and little political sense to speak of it before the establishment of the state of Israel. In the context of American politics, where there is a powerful fundamentalist lobby that manages to combine theoretical anti-Semitism with practical pro-Zionism in the interests of hastening Armageddon, this idea makes perfect sense. But it is a strange thing to set up as a moral authority.

Christianity, Judaism, and Islam all function as moral traditions; and all of them are religions which have learnt, developed, and preserved a great deal about the purposes of human life. But almost all of this has been in progress away from their common roots in the Bronze Age proscriptions of a jealous God. Dr Sacks describes the tradition as "predicated on the sanctity of human life". I do not see how anyone could come fresh to the Bible and see any regard for human life at all in the early parts. From the extermination of every liv-

ing thing outside the ark to the ethnic cleansing of the promised land, the story is one of utter disregard for human life except when it suits God's purposes.

The religious imagination is an extraordinarily fertile and creative faculty which can bring love and justice out of the most unpromising soil. But there is no use pretending that the Pentateuch is terribly promising soil. In a sense this makes the moral achievement of the Jews so much greater; it does not license anyone to preach on the excellence of the "Ten Commandments" as a sort of constitution document for modern society.

The second part of Dr Sacks's trope also invites examination: the tradition, he says "has survived for almost 4,000 years, while the great empires which persecuted its adherents have crumbled and vanished." At first sight this has a wonderful resonance, especially from the Jewish point of view. The Jews have inspired survival, 4,000 years. The trouble is that for nearly half of that period their main persecutors have been Christians: what price the "Judeo-Christian" heritage?

Talking about a "Judeo-Christian" tradition is wrong and misleading, above all because it ignores what traditions actually are: they are not prescriptions which can be read off and applied. They must be lived to be understood. It is a familiar argument against religion that people can act wickedly from the most beautiful ideals. But the opposite difficulty is just as great: that people will act virtuously as a consequence of horrendous theories. I have no doubt that Dr Sacks is an excellent man, and his family an engine of virtue. But if we wish to remove society, we should do as he does, and not as he says.

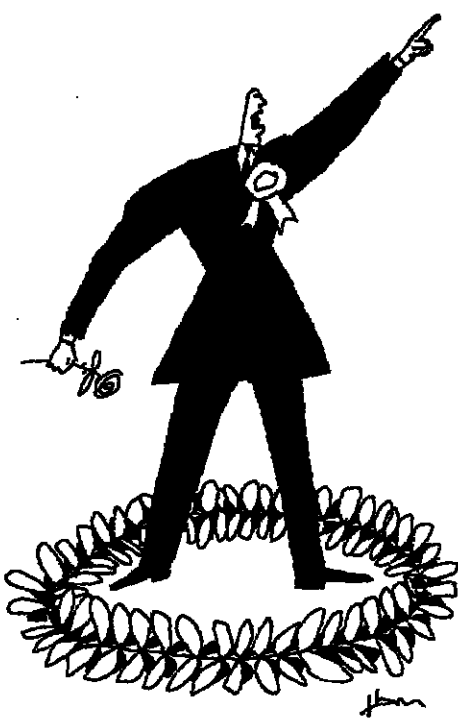
It's time for Labour to loosen its tongue

In the thesaurus, you soon get from "mountain" - what the Tories have now to climb to get anywhere near winning the election - to "bluff", what that party's spinners and spokespeople are going to be doing a lot of this weekend. Imagine you are huddling in a Central Office committee room. What are your options as you confront the by-election's arithmetic of voting shares and turn-out? You could go for broke, unseat your Prime Minister and make a fresh start (though it is hard to see where the proverbial men in suits could be found, and what they would do if John Major rounded on them with one of his favourite expletives). But even if you replaced the leader, you would still face the intractability of the Tories' problem: Europe. What is the point of a new leader unless he also offers a fresh start on Europe?

Stage right, voices urge that the Tories' electoral mountain would be so much easier to climb carrying the Union flag. Like an ex-smoker who can see the packet on the shelf, the Tory party has been eyeing the nationalist option. It admires the wrapping, even counts the cigarettes, but, so far, has resisted lighting up. With good reason. Euro-scepticism would swiftly give way to outright rejection of union with the rest of

Europe. To whoops of delight from the Murdoch press, Sir James Goldsmith would find his clothes ruffled. The Tories would lose their Chancellor and provoke a lurid split in their parliamentary ranks. For what? The idea that Europe can be turned, at this stage, into an election winner - a phantasm. There is no winning "independence" margin out there in the psephological thickets. No, anti-Europe sounds like a suicide letter read out at an inquest, not an election victory strategy. The Tories will some day have to face the European battle in their own ranks, but not yet. Opposition - powerlessness - is the place for settling scores and refining new identities. The party's best bet is to soldier on. It is a national interest, too. Whatever happens to single money, whatever reshaping occurs to and within the European Union, Britain's future is "European", and no political formation contending for parliamentary power can be anything else.

Labour, corseted in its self-control, was quick yesterday to present itself as anything but complacent. Its spokesmen are well-schooled in their humility. That is genuinely not the risk facing Labour. The risk, rather, is that voters will be deprived of a proper election campaign. Labour understandably wants to avoid putting a foot wrong. Garri-



ous John Prescott could give lessons to the Cosa Nostra these days. For team manager Tony Blair, the tactic is definitely *catenaccio*. But the overwhelming victory in the Wirral, on top of a huge opinion-poll lead, suggests that Labour's election strategists do not need to be so transfixed by their 1992 horror. Of course, there are lessons from previous defeat. It is clearly sensible to steer Tony Blair a million miles away from a Sheffield rally of the kind that so embarrassed Neil Kinnock. But fear of talking itself into danger may now risk Labour talking too little. Commendable determination to avoid making promises to the electorate that cannot be delivered could end up with a failure to communicate with the electorate at all.

This is not about posters and soundbites or the instant rebuttals and "clarifications" that Labour - all credit to the professionalism of its operation - has turned into a fine art. Nor is it about presenting bills of fare and inviting the electorate to tick its heart's desire. The paradox is that Tony Blair and his party are now so far ahead that they can afford to have a frank and open conversation with voters. Indeed, they would benefit by doing so, and so would our democracy.

This huge lead could be an excuse for Mr Blair and his colleagues to slam down the

hatches, dive dive dive, order battle silence, and then surface to celebrate watching the whole Tory fleet go down around them. But what about the rest of us? We want - need - to know what Labour intends in power. Instead of clammring up, Labour should open up - use its advantage to prepare us for Blair's Britain. Warn us about the difficulties that lie ahead. Invite us to understand the harder choices that must be made. Voters will, if anything, feel flattered at not being taken for granted. And they will be less shocked when Labour in power turns out to have a new and unexpected face. Good government will mean educating people about how much can be afforded, and what a government can accomplish, over how long.

Labour should behave like an agent who has won the contract, but needs to show how keen she is to close the sale. Voters are clearly saying they want a change. But government is not just about laying out a pitch, making sure to keep your tie straight and never saying anything except the obvious. It is about re-educating a country in Labour's view of the potential for change. Wirral South means Labour can anticipate government with some confidence. It shows that Labour has done enough to get elected. Enough, however, is not enough.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Nato is breaking Major's 'informal' promise to the Russians

Sir: Dr Dunabin of St Edmund Hall, Oxford (letter, 24 February) mistakes the occasion and character of the West's undertaking not to advance Nato eastwards.

It was made during discussions about the reunification of Germany, by John Major as Foreign Secretary and James Baker as US Secretary of State. Unfortunately for the Russians

it was made "informally", not written down or recorded in any subsequent *aide-memoire*, let alone treaty, and therefore neither the British nor the American government consider themselves bound by it.

I put down a question in the House of Lords about this, after Russian officials had begun complaining about it - including Mr Gorbachev in

London last year - and the answer came from the Foreign Office that there was no "formal undertaking". There was no denial of the informal undertaking, of which the Russians have apparently produced a rather confused tape.

That the Russians should have thought an Englishman's - or an American's - word might still be his

bond showed naivety and a lack of diplomatic professionalism. All the same, there is a sense of betrayal, and it is no wonder they are not too keen now on any simple "political charter" with Nato which might turn out no more binding than this other "political" undertaking.
Lord KENNET
House of Lords

Send down the clones

Sir: Fay Weldon's suggestion, cited by Andrew Marr ("Galileo, Copernicus - and now Dolly?", 26 February), that the great and the good should one day be rewarded with cloning permits, leads me to hope that the long-running "nature versus nurture" debate may one day be ended by the spectacle of a eminent judge being obliged to send to prison, for numerous crimes, a delinquent young clone of himself.
SIMON DAY
Bristol

Sir: Any engineer will tell you that it is (relatively) easy to design a product such as an aircraft or a computer program that will do what it is intended to do. It is much more difficult to ensure that it doesn't do what it is not intended to do.

By all means clone living creatures, but just because one sheep has been successfully test-flown does not mean that some future cloning experiments will not lead to catastrophic crashes.
Professor CHARLES HUGHES
Felixstowe, Suffolk

Sir: Human cloning would eliminate the need for men, but not for women. Would this be a good thing?
ROBERT A SANDOW
London W4

Living folk arts of England

Sir: The belief that canal boat art is the only surviving indigenous folk art in England is erroneous (report, 21 February). The "dressing" of crooks, clerks and market stalls with ramshorn, heated, pressed and carved, has been practised for many generations.

Ramshorn has been used in many countries for providing the hook at the top of the shepherd's crook but in England the farms were large enough to support a full-time shepherd. The long winter evenings gave time for the shepherd slowly to compress and bend the horn into shape, over the tall "chimney" oil lamp. Carving the horn into animal shapes followed.

There are about a thousand members of the British Stickmakers Guild, who, during the summer months, at agricultural fairs, hold "best stick" competitions. Mercifully, the art world and academia have taken little notice of this craft, precluded by the untutored and unselfconscious in garden sheds and barns.
PETER MASKENS
Hornchurch, Essex

Rough justice

Sir: As a national serviceman in the Royal Pioneer Corps in the Fifties I was frequently involved in preparing paperwork for courts martial ("MoD braced as judges outlaw courts martial", 26 February).

They all had three things in common. The prosecuting officer was an intelligent, ambitious captain (he became a brigadier). The defence was conducted by a rather gormless National Service second lieutenant. I don't recall anyone being found not guilty.

JOHN AULTON
Alcester, Warwickshire

LETTER from THE EDITOR

Here is a minor dilemma of the kind that faces all newspapers. On Thursday evening, we "knew" the result of the Wirral by-election. Opinion polling can be wrong, but for the Conservatives to have held the seat, the polls would have had to have been wildly, extraordinarily, massively wrong. All the ordinary evidence, culled from weeks of reporting, canvassing, and analysing, would have had to have been equally out. We also knew that our early pre-result editions would be read by people who had heard figures on radio or television.

So the dilemma was this: did we run a story saying "Labour wins Wirral", which was true (but not yet); or one saying "Labour hopes to win Wirral", which would have been safe, but would have looked unbearably wet and ignorant the next morning? After heated discussion, we went for "New Labour motors home", above a picture of the cheery candidate and his wife in the back of their car. Clear enough. But what if the polls were wrong, went the cry. Well, said the sub-editor, we could always say it meant "New Labour motors home" to London to work out what went wrong in the Wirral by-election. This ranks as the least convincing journalistic alibi heard in the office this year.

Why do all newspapers, including this one, have a slightly flattened, smudgy look? Knowing people tell me it's the "bundler", the print site machine which parcels papers up. This week I went to our Watford print site to see *The Independent* thunder through the presses. I was struck by the glossy, pin-sharp freshness of the colour and words when they first emerged, slightly damp and warm, smelling, to an editor's nose, better than new bread. So what happens? The bundler, a harmless looking creature, is not the culprit. It is simply that the papers are stacked in lorries for hours, and the weight presses down on the colour and print. They look flattened because they have been. I just thought you'd like to know.

One of the odder, but more enjoyable meetings of the week was breakfast with the Serbian

Lunch at a television company included a short discussion about cloning and medicine. Another guest was Ken Livingstone, who worked as a theatre assistant in a London hospital in the Sixties. He told a chilling story. Apparently, back then, a high proportion of people who had open heart surgery mysteriously died during the operation. Eventually, an American doctor queried whether it was entirely sensible to use the eight to 10 points of blood needed for the operation straight from the fridge. The global medical equivalent of a stunned silence followed. Across the world, patients had simply been chilled to death. Once hospitals started warming the blood, the death rate fell dramatically. Never let it be said that this column fails to find something to brighten your Saturday morning.

Andrew Marr

QUOTE UNQUOTE

At the roots of his hostility to her [Margaret Thatcher] is a macho streak which sees only a subservient role for women, however talented, and a resentment that a woman achieved the supreme office which he coveted and which was denied him - Lord Tebbit, on the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine

The voters did not just vote against a discredited Tory government, they voted for New Labour - Ben Chapman, winner of the Wirral South by-election and the area's first Labour MP

Wouldn't you love to be cloned? I think I would. This has nothing to do with vanity, with thinking the world would be a better place if there was another one of me going on after I'm dead. It is pure curiosity - Richard Dawkins, Professor of Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University

Low inflation is the product of sound Tory policies. You may be able to clone a sheep but you can't clone successful Chancellors - Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer

Britain has long adopted the ostrich position when it comes to teenage sex - Alison Hadley, national policy officer of Brook Advisory Centres

The English aristocracy is now only the middle class with knots on - Vivienne Westwood, designer



Man at arms: Lord Armstrong (right foreground) during the visit of the US general Ulysses S Grant (fifth from left) to Armstrong's Elswick works, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in 1877. In the background is a 100-ton muzzle-loading 17.2-inch gun
Photograph: Vickers Defence Systems

Sir: Stephen Goodwin reports (22 February) that W G Armstrong was "suspected of pirating" the Victorian gun barrel design of Captain Alexander Blakely. This "tale of murky dealing in the arms trade" seems more appropriate to a *Tod Slaughter* melodrama than to historical fact.

Armstrong addressed the problem of artillery design at the request of the Duke of Newcastle, Minister of War, in December 1854. This was because of the poor performance of the almost medieval British field guns during the Crimean War. Armstrong, aged 44, had already achieved fame because of his interventions in the field of hydraulics and for his researches into static electricity. By 1858, Armstrong had produced

Tales from the Victorian arms bazaar

- and proven in trials against six rival designs - a revolutionary field artillery system, the notable features of which were breech loading, polygroove rifling and elongated, fused projectiles. The metallurgy was important, and Armstrong undertook much research into the technology of barrel construction. Essentially, he adopted a steel liner on to which were shrunk layers of wrought iron: a technique already well established in the manufacture of small-calibre guns.

Mr Goodwin reports that Blakely's claims were refuted by Armstrong's family. However, Armstrong was aged only 38, with 32 more years to live, when Blakely died, so he would

have responded to claims of a scandal in person. I went through all his many surviving papers and correspondence before producing a biography in 1983. There is no evidence that he secretly borrowed Blakely's ideas.

Armstrong's patents covered more than just barrel construction. By giving them to the government, he lost substantially, since the government set up its own establishment to make guns to his design. His order book dried up immediately and the ordnance part of his business survived only through exports.
PETER MCKENZIE
Vickers Defence Systems
Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Sir: The contention that arms sales enable Britain to "punch above its weight in diplomacy" ignores the reality of the contemporary global arms market ("British lion claws a king-sized stake in the world's arms bazaar", 26 February). The increasingly competitive scramble for defence contracts in the post-Cold War era has made the world's arms bazaar a buyer's, rather than a seller's market. Importers are not only able to arrange favourable economic agreements; they can also exert political leverage, so eager are the exporting nations to retain contracts in the shrinking global market.
LIZ CLEGG
Arms Trade Programme Co-ordinator
Saferworld
London WC1

British guilt over the Benin bronzes

Sir: Thomas Sutcliffe (article, 27 February) suggests that the restitution of another country's cultural treasures "should not be decided by reasons of politics... but by a free competition of reverence".

Where the Benin bronzes are concerned it is indeed the issue of "reverence" that so exercises Africanists and the Nigerian government. Not only are the bronzes unique, but they are the finest example of casting in the "lost wax" technique anywhere in the world.

Sutcliffe then points out that they would have much less value in Lagos than they do here and that to send them to Lagos would be to "deplete their power". The bronzes were not taken from Lagos but from Benin City, capital of the once independent state of Benin. In that city stands a large, reverently maintained museum, many of its walls hung with photographs of the bronzes that adorn the walls of Western museums. A visit to Benin museum leaves any Western visitor with an overwhelming feeling of guilt and sadness.
NIGEL EVANS
London W4

Children from poor homes thrive at fee-paying schools

Sir: I hope the information Mr IM Perry imparts to his students is more accurate than the figures he quotes in his letter referring to the Assisted Places Scheme (26 February).

The current cost of the scheme, which helps academically able children from low-income families to attend independent schools, is £117m, not £200m. Next year, as the scheme expands, it will be £141m. The doubling of the number of pupils in the scheme will be

achieved over several years if there is no change of government. Nor is this an "enormous state subsidy" to schools, which could fill their over-subscribed places with full fee-payers.

Almost 40,000 children currently benefit. They come from families with an average annual household income of only £10,900. They demonstrate the wisdom of the investment in their education by achieving outstanding examination results; research last year indicated

that they do better by up to three A-level grades than their contemporaries of similar abilities in other kinds of schools.

Underfunding of other parts of the education service should not be corrected by denying opportunity to tens of thousands of children from poor families.
DAVID WOODHEAD
National Director
Independent Schools Information Service
London SW1

Keep in lane and stay on the side of the angels

Sir: You report (27 February) a 28 per cent drop in accidents on the busiest section of the M25 after the introduction of variable speed limits, which discourage lane-changing. The method of driving thus encouraged - staying in lane - is the opposite of that favoured by P G Russell-Smith (letter, 25 February). Those of us who stay most of the time in the middle lane of a motorway, instead of

swinging constantly between lanes 1 and 2, may be on the side of the angels even if we have no God-given right.

I didn't find motorway driving in France and Germany any safer than in Britain.
NIGEL SEYMER
Lower Slaughter, Gloucestershire

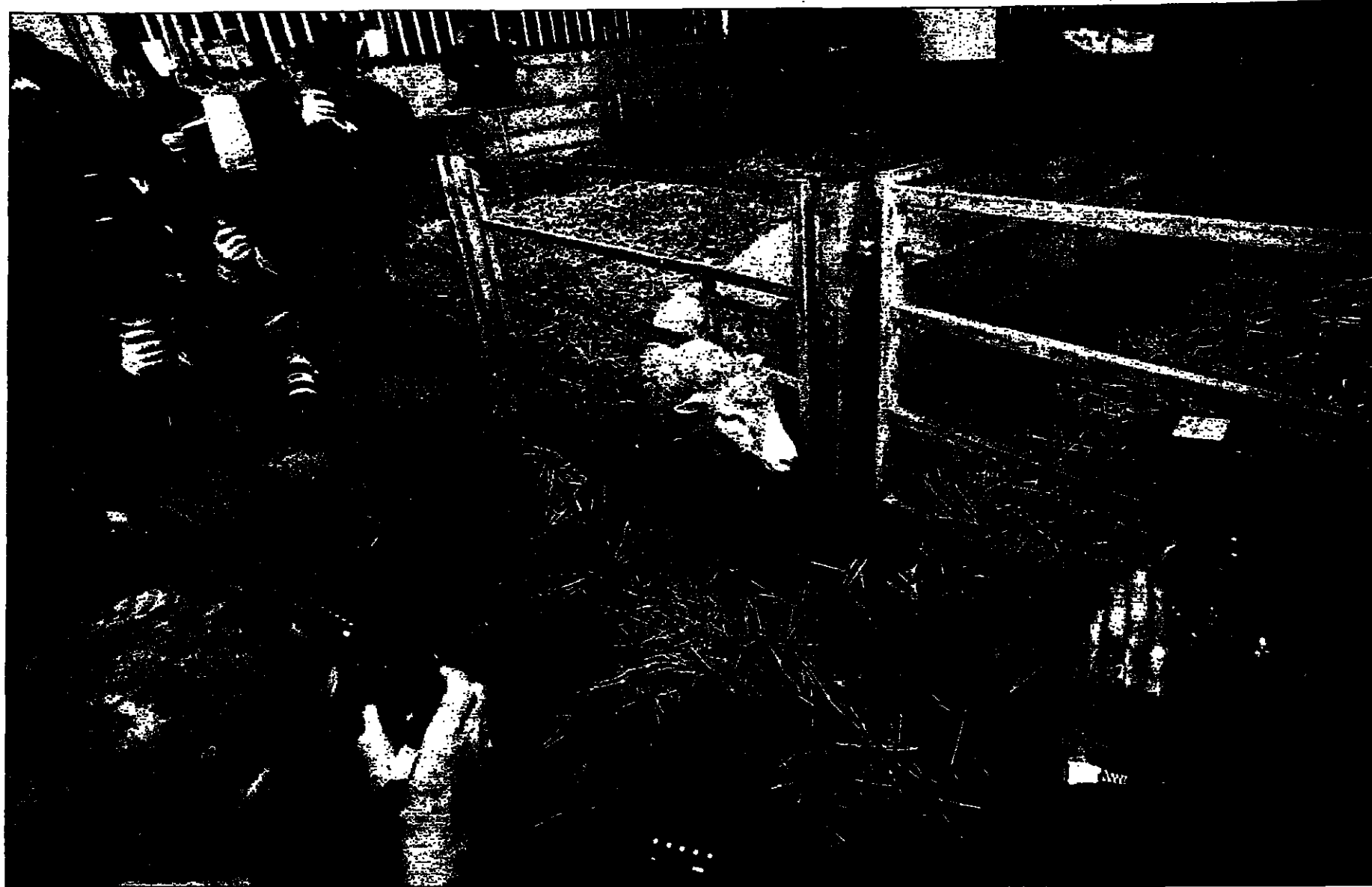
Sir: May I point out to P G Russell-Smith that if I maintain 70mph, it is

indeed my God-given right to drive from London to Newcastle in the middle lane of the motorway. There's no point in ducking and weaving between groups of slower vehicles. And if Mr Russell-Smith sat 500 yards behind me at 70mph we would all get there safely and at the maximum legal speed.

SOLDFIELD
London W3

the saturday story

Dolly the clone is the story of the decade, maybe even the century. Why? Because she embodies our greatest fears and hopes, says Peter Popham



The sheep of things to come: Dolly captivates the world's media at her first photo-call

Photograph: Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert

The sheep that shook the world

This was the week when, thanks to Dolly, the cloned sheep, the United States rediscovered William Blake. "Little lamb, who made thee? Dost thou know who made thee?"

intoned the editorial column of the *Christian Science Monitor* solemnly.

In Dolly's case, of course, the answer was Dr Ian Wilmut of Roslin Laboratories near Edinburgh. Dolly's mild, myopic features nuzzled out of front pages across the world as, not for the first time and certainly not for the last, the whole planet went clone crazy.

Prominent columnists made the most dramatic comparisons. James K. Glassman in the *Washington Post* conducted his own one-man Dutch auction. "Dolly is the biggest story of the year, maybe of the decade, or even of the century," he enthused, thereby echoing the view of Joseph Rotblat, nuclear physicist and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, that Dolly's creation was equal in importance

to the building of the atom bomb.

It was a lot for a mere sheep to take on board. Along with Blake, innocence and the atom bomb, many of the 20th century's nastier ghosts rose from their tombs and clanked their chains. For although the use of the idea of cloning in science-fiction goes back only half a century, and only entered popular discourse after the publication of *Alvin Toffler's Future Shock* in 1970, the idea that man might—or must—control the quality of human breeding, and that human beings might be mass-produced for particular functions just like widgets in a factory, is one of our favourite nightmares.

Wells explored the idea in *The Time Machine*. Huxley in *Brave New World*, and large swathes of intellectual opinion in Britain and elsewhere backed the idea of practical eugenics in the 1920s and 1930s. Only after Hitler came to power and began to put the ideas into practice for the creation of a master race did everyone realise that the whole

idea stank. Eugenics remains as solemn a taboo as antisemitism, which helps to explain why German reaction to Dolly's advent has on the whole been both bleak and forceful.

Germans are extremely sensitive to the issue. Peter Benninghoff-Luehl, an expert in genetic engineering at the Konrad Adenauer Institute, said, "Because of our history, there would be near-unanimous outrage here if anyone ever tried to clone a human." *Die Welt* agreed: "The cloning of human beings would fit precisely into Adolf Hitler's world view... there is no doubt that he would have used this technology intensively if it had been available at that time. Thank God it wasn't."

The peculiarity about the Dolly bombshell, as the German reaction shows, is the degree to which the world was ready for it. To the great mass of people outside secretive scientific circles, the atomic bomb, even as it burst over Hiroshima, was a profound and terrifying mystery. Besides feeling terror and shock (and gratitude), no-one knew what

to think for weeks and months afterwards.

In the case of cloning, however, the first shoe dropped way back in the 1960s, with the cloning of plants. We've had the best part of 40 years to get our responses ready. "It's unbelievable," raved Lee Silver, a biology professor at Princeton University, for whom the announcement came just in time for a rewriting of the first chapter of his forthcoming book. "It basically means there are no limits. It means that all science-fiction is true. They said it could never be done and now here it is, done before 2000." Scientists were astonished and the rest of us had our joke-books to hand.

The Munich newspaper *Abendzeitung*, bucking the solemn German response, printed five identical pictures of Chancellor Helmut Kohl over a front-page banner headline reading "Genetics researchers say they could now clone Kohl." Other lucky candidates for cloning swam rapidly into view elsewhere. "Imagine five Michael Jordans playing five other Michael Jordans," invited syndicated Washington DC columnist George F. Will. Others soon raised the point that, as the *Washington Post* editorialised, "The people likeliest to succumb to the temptation are just the people one least wants to have around in perpetuity." In other words, the megamagnates, the narcissists, and all those people willing to cough up

\$120,000 to have themselves frozen throughout eternity on the off-chance of something turning up. If it is these people rather than the meek who are going to inherit the earth, perhaps the German paper *Hanoversche Allgemeine* was right to rumble out the warning: "With the cloning of an adult creature, humans can put an end to evolution."

The fantasies about cloning, whether about happy neo-clones or awesome Jordan clones or

teased and titillated us with its horrors and charms.

Just a month ago, the notion was revived in a new form in an essay by Tom Wolfe introducing the ideas of the American sociobiologist Edward O. Wilson, who, attempting to clinch the age-old nature versus nurture argument decisively in favour of nature, has stated that the human being is not born a *tabula rasa* waiting to be filled by

ing in your life, including the fat content of your body, that is not genetically predetermined."

That is the cultural context into which Dolly, in her flawed innocence, has crash-landed. Wolfe sees a culture-bracing itself for the imminent announcement not only that the soul is dead, but that it never existed. "Exposed negatives waiting to be slipped into the developing fluid of experience" is all we have a right to imagine ourselves to be. Scientists will in time reproduce us as readily as chocolate bars, and the resulting clones will have as little connection as a chocolate to anything beyond the contingencies of existence. All the illusions which have nurtured our civilisation will by then have burned away (leaving us, Wolfe implies, hopelessly floundering).

Perhaps this hysterical juncture is a proper moment to stop and assess—for once again, the apocalyptic and the rapidly optimistic have hitched themselves to our wagon and are dragging us deep into a sci-fi horror future.

For one thing, the intensely loaded word "clone" might usefully be replaced by the phrase "identical twin". As a correspondent to the *Independent* pointed out, identical twins, like clones, share all their DNA; and identical twins (but not clones like Dolly) also share nine months of incompressible intimacy inside the womb. Identical twins can of course be hard to

Many of the 20th century's nastier ghosts have risen from their tombs and clanked their chains

evil slave armies, take us straight to the heart of why this is a topic that has given us delightful frights for a century or more. It is the most solemn belief of our civilisation that every person is born unique; it is also our experience of each other, and the basis for our reliance on such devices as fingerprints and DNA testing.

But for nearly 200 years, we have been teased by the achievements of industrialisation, of the mass production of identical objects. At least since the invention of photography, the idea that identical human beings might also be turned out in some great Xerox machine has

experience but rather as "an exposed negative waiting to be slipped into developer fluid." For example, as Wolfe goes on to expand, quoting identical twin research at the University of Minnesota, "an individual's happiness is largely genetic. Some people are hardwired to be happy and some are not."

Wolfe sees this decisive shift of the debate in favour of the nature tendency gathering force as the millennium approaches. "Today... barely three years before the end of the millennium, if your appetite for newspapers, magazines and television is big enough, you will quickly get the impression that there is nothing

tell apart; but no-one doubts the distinctive humanity of each twin, despite their twin-ness. The words carbon-copy or Xerox are never applied to twins, not because they are insulting but because they are plain wrong.

As for the correctness or wrongness of the "exposed negative" metaphor, one of the long-range benefits of the Dolly breakthrough may be that, if and when human beings are successfully cloned, scientists will finally have the wherewithal to lay the nature/nurture debate to rest. One way or the other, we will know for sure whether and to what extent we are born or made. Until then, the jury remains out.

Accept, at least for the sake of argument, that all the talk of slave armies and eugenics and master races and brain-dead organ factories is so much titillating nonsense, passed around gleefully as our ancestors passed around tales of ghosts and witches. Does that mean that Dolly should hold no terrors for us? Instead of alarming ourselves, should we be toasting a (theoretical) way to end to the extinction of all endangered species?

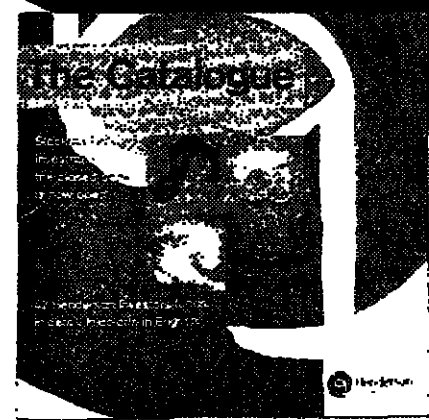
Not altogether. The real cause for anxiety about human cloning, surely, concerns the psychological predicament of the cloned individual. This is not a predicament unique to cloning, but is also raised by many of the new possibilities created by advances in embryology, whereby, for example, babies can be born to long-dead parents.

The creation of Dolly raises this anxiety anew, and with special intensity. As George Will wrote in the *Washington Post*, "Connections with parents, siblings and ancestors are integral to being human." How will an individual fare when short of all such connections? Do we not risk bringing into being a uniquely profound form of existential loneliness? Arguably, it is only in a society such as ours where family relationships are already far more attenuated than elsewhere, that such a step could be contemplated without horror. In our insensitivity, we could produce children who have good reason to hate their (non-)parents with a special passion.

The good news is that, outside of murder, they probably won't be able to do much about it. The Americans have thought this through already. Sue Goetnick, life sciences writer of the *Dallas Morning News*, quotes John Robertson, professor of law and ethics at the University of Texas at Austin, who is very clear on this point. "Any person born through cloning would have no right to sue for damages," she writes before quoting Professor Robertson: "Texas and most states don't recognize claims that I have been wronged by being born in that way." Well, not yet they don't.

Most catalogues ask you to spend money.

Ours shows you how to make it.



Your 96/97 PEP choice here.

Call free on 0500 707 707

Quoting reference CAT 48

The Catalogue is a grand tour of the world of unit trusts, investment trusts and PEPs – including our own 42 funds – in full colour. Because it's written in plain English, not

plain gobbledegook, we think you'll find it makes investing a whole lot more rewarding.

Which is the whole point, isn't it? For your free copy, call free on 0500 707 707, or return the coupon below. No stamp is required.

To order your copy of the Catalogue please complete and return this coupon to: Investor Services, Henderson Investors, FREEPOST, Newcastle, RG13 1BR. CAT 1 IND 1 30 7224. Please tick this box if you are an existing investor.

Title _____ Initials _____ Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____



Please remember that the value of an investment and the income from it can fall as well as rise as a result of market and currency fluctuations and you may not get back the amount originally invested. Tax assumptions may change if the law changes and the value of tax relief will depend upon your individual circumstances. Henderson Investors is the name under which Henderson Financial Management Limited and Henderson Touche Perrat Unit Trust Management Limited (both regulated by IMRO and the Personal Investment Authority) and Henderson Administration Limited (regulated by IMRO) provide investment products and services. 3 Fenchurch Avenue, London EC3A 2PR.

jo brand's mum



Jo is away in Spain, and I know that this time it is Madrid rather than Malaga and the Prado rather than the Pizzeria. She has persuaded *The Independent* to trust me with the column, thus enabling me to realise journalistic ambitions that were early, but short-lived. This week's struggle for words has identified that writing is a darn sight more demanding than listening and talking, those essential social work skills.

On Friday, the first day of the week for Saturday columnists, I stood in my Ludlow kitchen and cheered with Michael Hickey, Vincent Hickey and Jimmy Robinson. I cried with Michael Hickey and his Mum, and I felt an intense sense of joy at the triumph over injustice. I wonder, do those Tory ministers who were so "comfortable" with the original guilty verdict feel any sense of self-doubt, and might there be a public apology? As I think about those two splendid women, Ann Whelan and Ann Skelt, I am proud to be in the family of women, and I feel an envy of the strength of those particular women that

allowed them to stand up against the gross institutional dishonesty and legal inertia. What lessons there are for those wanting to tackle the injustices in our society with which, I am sure, those same Tory ministers feel comfortable. We need strong women backed up by decent and honest men; thank you Mr Nichol and Mr Foot. Sadly such a description doesn't seem to fit any of the political parties.

Classic FM's adverts aren't a bundle of laughs, with numerous charitable appeals scoring high on the cringe factor, and with the NSPCC's pre-Christmas appeal leading the field. This week, though, they have redeemed themselves. The water companies of England and Wales are proclaiming their public-spirited approach to service provision with little vignettes describing their laudable activities, and finishing with "just one of the success stories the water industry can tell". I haven't had such a good laugh out of an advertisement for a long time, and if it should work well perhaps the agency

could set about selling Douglas Hogg as the farmers' friend.

The turn-on of the week was found in unexpected quarters. *The Sleeping Beauty* hardly promises erotica, but Birmingham Royal Ballet came up trumps in the form of Anthony King's Bluebird. I can't think of many performances that could raise the temperature by several degrees in the auditorium of an afternoon matinee – but then there can't be too many thighs like his around.

So the big hair brigade is not plagued with bad hair days. We discover that a large chunk of the Legal Aid fund finds its way into the coffers of individual QCs. The

figures quoted by the Lord Chancellor's department range from £300,000 to more than £500,000. There is a rider which somehow doesn't massively reassure me. It seems that these payments relate to cases closed in 1995/96 and, as the Chairman of the Bar says, "These figures do not represent annual earnings so no real conclusion can be drawn from them." How about "There are some nice little earners to be had out of limited taxpayers' funds"? It would be good to be able to sit in court in the future and not hear witnesses harassed on the subject of the compensation they may be hoping to claim or have claimed already, a tactic used by barristers to illustrate how worthless is the evidence

being given, because the individual has a desire to have some financial reward for the suffering he has experienced.

I telephoned Jo to let her know that the column was written, and discovered that she and her mate were in a Turkish bath. I was impressed by the liberality of the Spaniards: mixed Turkish baths... But I was exercised by the question of where the bathers put their mobile phones. An almost immediate call back wiped out my current image of steam swirling around the mounds of male and female bodies to the tune of ringing mobile phones. It seems they were in a Turkish bath.

Thank you Jo for this unusual example of nepotism, thank you editor for the opportunity of five minutes of fame, and thank you Ashley Coombes for the photo session. My photo of you is great. If your photo of me is not so good then I shall take comfort in knowing that the process was good even if the outcome was not, one of the major defences of a social worker.

Joanne Brand

سكوت من الأصل

HRH on your PC

A privileged preview of the Royal Family's majestic Web site

David Aaronovitch

It was reported yesterday that the Royal Family plans to open a Web site on the Internet. But - after binging footman - I am able to give readers of Saturday's *Independent* (terrific value at 60p) a sneak preview of the Queen's homepage:

[Large coat of arms, lion, unicorn, etc.]

Welcome to Majesty Web site - the only Net venue for all the information, gossip and news about Great Britain's Royal Family, as it goes about the business of representing Britain and defending the faith.

Press here for entry to Royal Heritage, four round the palace of your choice in one of two guided trips: Brusque - with the virtual reality HRH Prince Philip, Extra Slow But Gracious - with HM the Queen Mother. Or visit the site of an important historic event in the dramatic tale of the world's most famous royals. Click and see real-time re-enactments of these places and events: The Great Gallery, Windsor, 1933. Queen Victoria's drawing room, Osborne, 1883. The bedroom at Highgrove any night in August 1984. A third-floor apartment, Mayfair.

Sound gallery. Press here to relive those great Royal moments:

King George's visit to the East End, 1941 (including the famous "lord love yer majesty"); The Coronation of 1952; A Silver Jubilee Street Party in the Wirral, 1977; The Royal Wedding 1981 (hear Diana mess up that name again!); The Squidgygate tapes; Panorama; Ruby Wax; Fergie and the chimp.

Go on a tour of the flora and fauna of the estates of the Duchy of Cornwall. Prince Charles is your guide. Or visit the BigEars Homepage for news and views on organic farming, architecture, or the Bushmen of the Kalahari.

Is there a child at your PC? Then try Beatrice and Engenie's Kids' Korner. Features include a special children's advice page on handling moves - and, of course, Animal Adventure, where the different bores of shotguns needed to bring down anything furred or



Don't shoot the piano tuner, he's only gone to Cuba

by Jonathan Glancey

Havana - salsa, son, jazz, disco, all Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 31 trembling uncertainly from the open door of a run-down shack in a Havana suburb. No!

Come not! It's certainly an unfamiliar sound, especially when played by a ragged-trousered teenager with a grin as wide as the Straits of Florida.

Ludwig's stentorian chords tangle with the bells of hundreds of new Chinese "Flying Pigeon" and "Friendship" bicycles whirring along Havana's 3rd Avenue, while inside this improbable *casa de musica*, yellowing busts of Ludwig Van rattle and roll on top of a Bechstein upright, gnawed by termites, as Romantic Germany's finest reaches a heroic if wobbly conclusion.

"That wasn't me playing," says Ben Treuhaff, piano tuner and embargo-breaker of Berkeley, California. "I play Beethoven's sonatas a little too fast and hard for Cuban tastes, or anyone's taste for that matter. The great thing is that there are more and more Cubans wanting to play the piano. The sad thing is that it's hard to get parts and so many pianos are broken or out of tune."

"I've been running my 'Send a Piano to Havana' programme for 18 months now and taken 35 pianos and \$3,500-worth of parts, mostly bass strings, from the States to Cuba. Whether people want to play Beethoven or boogie, I don't mind. As a piano nut, I just want them to have the chance to learn and to enjoy playing."

Jesus Maria Gaspari is learning. "My Beethoven is not all that great just yet, but thanks for listening," he says. "I only got a chance to play him just before Christmas. Sheet music is hard to get in Cuba. Paper to print it on is also. It's much simpler just to improvise with local sounds. As for pianos, they're as rare as a new car. Send us some more, if you can; we can make good use of them."

To get 35 pianos to Cuba has, you may have guessed, got Treuhaff into hot water with the US federal authorities. "I stand accused of felony piano-tuning," he says, trying hard not to laugh. Why? Because Washington imposed a trade embargo on the island in February 1962 and, 35 years on, any US citizen who buys so much as a three-peso shot of rum runs the risk of being prosecuted under the antique Trading With The Enemy Act, as if schmoozing in a bar in Old Havana were the equivalent of selling Grumman Helicopters to the Imperial Japanese Navy the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor.



Jessica Mitford's son stands accused of breaking the Trading With The Enemy Act for shipping pianos to Havana. His chosen form of defence is ridicule

topple the 38-year-old Castro regime, and dreams of turning Havana into Miami and Cuba into Florida. Despite Congress's best attempts to starve the island into submission (or insurrection against Castro), Cuba refuses to give up its independence.

"When I went out a second time recently," says Treuhaff, "the US Treasury threatened me with a fine of \$1.3m and a 10-year prison sentence. For sending pianos to Cuba? During the Gulf War, US companies were able to ship medical equipment and drugs to Iraq, but if they sent them to Cuba, they are in danger of being busted and their personnel fined or imprisoned. I went out and back dressed as a piano. If they were going to arrest me when I got back home, they'd have had to have taken a cardboard upright into custody."

Building, Washington DC 20510, if ever you want to write or look him up." To date, Treuhaff has refused to reply to Treuhaff's missives, while Ms Scott's Treasury department has held off from naming the piano man. Even an official "cease and desist" order and a fine of \$10,000 have yet to be enforced.

Treuhaff's tactic of helping individual Cubans to play the piano while holding Washington up to ridicule is clever, if dicey. It is also very much in the spirit of his late mother, the writer and human rights activist Jessica Mitford. Ben is Jessica's son by her second husband, Bob Treuhaff, the celebrated civil rights lawyer.

A rebel to the core, Mitford was a card-carrying member of the Communist Party living and working in the States at the time she was subpoenaed by Joe McCarthy's US House Committee on Un-American

Democracy Act was calculated to ratchet up the embargo at Cuba's darkest hour, and I guess it was meant to cause Cubans to revolt against our old enemy [Castro]. That didn't happen. Instead, the shortages of food and medicine meant that the kids became a bit more asthmatic and the adults got skinnier than ever, and on the streets of Havana and Santiago de Cuba the embargo was universally condemned. Today, Fidel's market reforms are gradually solving the food problem. But the kids are still sick."

Skinny and wheezing, but eager to learn the piano, Jesus Maria Gaspari's pal Camillo Gagarin [after the Soviet cosmonaut] Arbenz is turning the pages of the Beethoven score. "I hope to go to the National Music School next year. Sure, I'd like to eat a lot more, but the piano will be my way to success."

If he makes it, will he want to make a break to Miami? "No, I'm happy to be Cuban, but I'd like to play in Paris or Madrid. Things are changing here: I'm confident I'll get the chance."

Maybe. Since Torricelli's act was successfully steam-rollered through Congress, the Cuban government has signed a plethora of lucrative joint-venture deals with foreign companies world-wide. Last year the number of foreign visitors to Cuba exceeded 1 million, and now that US dollars are freely exchangeable in Havana into Cuban pesos, the economy has opened up and grown (7 per cent in 1996). This is a remarkable about-turn after the grim years from 1990 to 1994, when Cubans were reduced to living like Third World peasants in their beautiful, if crumbling, cities.

Cubans may be beginning to eat adequately, if not particularly well, and the economy is evidently growing, though anti-US feeling is still riding high on the embargoed island. But, because this is Cuba - hot, sexy, Caribbean - there is always time to forget international politics and savor-rattling, and to dance to a little music.

While the US Treasury decides whether or not to shoot (metaphorically, of course) the piano tuner from California, Cubans *salsa* on. And the sound of brass, bass, guitar and rhythm sticks is underpinned by embargo-busting American pianos stroked and hammered by the likes of Jesus Maria and Camillo Gagarin. Roll over Beethoven, and tell Bill Clinton the news.



PREPARE TO BE SHOCKED.

A minute after this photo was taken, the dog was beaten, soaked with water and electrocuted.

Her crime? To be born in Asia where dealing with the world's biggest stray dog problem is a cruel affair.

Sometimes, the power supply is not strong enough to kill dogs like this. So some are buried alive.

The World Society for the Protection of Animals is working with local authorities and animal welfare groups to convince them to neuter not kill. We're helping by supporting shelters and supplying vital veterinary equipment.

£10 is all it takes to humanely neuter and care for one dog. You can help us save dogs like this and other innocent animals. Please send what you can now. Thank you.

Please return this coupon with your gift to the address below today.

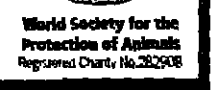
Name _____ Address _____ Postcode _____

Here is my donation of £ _____ (Please make cheques payable to WSPA or complete the credit card details below.)

Card No. _____ Exp. date _____ Switch issue no. _____ Today's date _____

CALL 0990 214 214 NOW TO MAKE AN INSTANT DONATION

Please send this completed form and your donation to: WSPA, Dept. AP28, Freepost W-0004, Northampton, NN3 6BR. No stamp is needed. THANK YOU



The damaged women of Africa

I have just returned from making a TV documentary in Kachchorwa District - a part of Uganda that is populated by the Sabiny tribe, which still practises female genital mutilation (some people prefer less emotive and condemnatory descriptions such as "female genital cutting" and "female circumcision"). As an African myself, but Westernised, and a feminist, I did not want to make a film that merely attacked the Sabinys for being misogynous "savages".

Yes, there are unprogressive elements, but I had heard that some Sabiny girls and parents were refusing to submit to genital mutilation. And I wanted to focus on these pioneers who are rejecting a practice that not only causes enormous pain, but can also lead to infection, incontinence, permanent disability, infertility, childbirth complications and death.

Kachchorwa is a remote and largely unmodernised, sensationally beautiful, mountainous region near Uganda's border with Kenya. The film crew and I arrived during the "circumcision season" - which takes place every two years, in December.



Men should not bear all the blame for the shameful tradition of female genital mutilation, argues Donu Kogbara

hope and joy, they were a minority. My trip to Kachchorwa was a harrowing experience.

Girls - aged 13 to 18 - were held down in village clearings while their clitorises were sliced off, with razors and without anaesthetic. The atmosphere was festive - much drinking, cheerful chanting and merry dancing accompanied this macabre public circus. And the girls, though stoically silent during and after the operation, were clearly in agony and shock. Blood trickled down their legs. They could barely walk.

I wondered how many of them would be dead or crippled by Easter. It is hard to believe that this butchery is still condoned in most African countries. Three months on, I still wake up in the middle of the night, fearful and incandescent with rage.

What angers me most is the active involvement of women. Female genital mutilation is often blamed on male chauvinism and patriarchal social values. And it is true that far too many African men will not marry an uncut woman.

It is also true that female genital mutilation originates in a male desire to control female sexuality, to eliminate the female libido, to punish women and to enhance male sexual pleasure (some women undergo infibulation, a radical form of mutilation which leaves them with tiny vaginal openings).

about the women who eagerly collude in their own violation? The "surgeon" in Kachchorwa - a woman - gleefully informed me that mutilation is good for women, and that she never mutilates anyone who doesn't want to be mutilated. Many of the mutilated mothers, grandmothers and aunts of her most recent victims wholeheartedly agreed with her claims.

The 116,000-strong Sabinys comprise only 5 per cent of the Ugandan population. And the male-dominated Ugandan government does not approve of female genital mutilation. But its exhortations are dismissed or resented by most Sabiny females. Indeed, when Ugandan TV screened a programme about the disadvantages of mutilation, they rebelled, instead of welcoming an excuse to escape the knife. That year, a record number of Sabiny women requested mutilation.

According to a United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) document: "In the early Nineties, attempts to enforce compliance with international health and human rights norms created a backlash. Local (Sabiny) women who had evaded the custom embraced the blade as an act of resistance to cultural interference."

Female genital mutilation is unconditionally denounced by some African women, such as Efua Dorkenoo and Ramat Mohammed, a Ghanaian and a Nigerian who run Forward, an

ill-resourced but dynamic lobbying group based in London. But in Sierra Leone (one of many examples), women's secret societies enthusiastically endorse mutilation. Members of these societies perform the operation and aggressively threaten those who oppose it.

An estimated 6,000 girls are mutilated every day in Africa, and an estimated 120 million living women have undergone some form of genital mutilation. But when I complain about these horrifying statistics, it is often women who tell me to shut up. Women from Somalia and Sudan (where 90 per cent are mutilated) have told me to mind my own business whenever I venture to suggest that female genital mutilation is sadomasochistic, shameful, unnecessary and incompatible with the late-20th century.

In the UK, 13,000 British-born children whose parents hail from Africa are at risk from mutilation. Frequently, it is their mothers who insist that they go back to Africa in the school holidays to be mutilated. Meanwhile, there are men who are either uncompromising opponents of the practice - or simply not as committed to it as some women. Sometimes it is men who look sheepish when I rant about the evils of mutilation, and it is fathers who logically assess the "benefits" and decide that their daughters should be spared. Sometimes it is men who

firmly echo my view that there is an urgent need for action. Jackson Chekweto runs Reach, an anti-mutilation initiative in Kachchorwa sponsored by the UNFPA. Chekweto, a Sabiny graduate, uses gentle persuasion and education as tools. He does not lose his temper or opt for a "you backward natives" approach.

Nevertheless, this mild-mannered man does regard mutilation as barbaric, and he seemed much more upset about it than any of the local women I interviewed. Even those Sabiny women who swore that they'd never be willingly mutilated were less obviously furious about the practice than Chekweto.

I do not want to give the false impression that men like Chekweto are commonplace. Nor do I want to undermine the extremely valuable input of the many women of all races who have fought a good fight against female genital mutilation. Female genital mutilation is probably actively opposed by more women than men.

But why should any woman support it? I will, no doubt, be accused of attacking victims who don't know any better. But I'm sick of the view that African women are brainless children who can't be criticised for passionately embracing oppression and possible death.

The film can be seen in the 'Correspondent' slot on BBC2, at 6.55 tonight.

business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Trader suspended as NatWest takes £50m hit

Tom Stevenson
and John Willcock

NatWest stunned the City late last night with a warning that its first-half profits would take a £50m hit to cover serious "mispricing errors" on the interest rate options book run by its investment banking arm, NatWest Markets. The announcement came only days after the bank accompanied full-year results with the promise that its derivatives business was "tightly controlled".

NatWest declined to elaborate on a terse statement that read: "As a result of its internal checking procedures NatWest Markets has discovered mispricing errors in its interest rate options book. A senior trader has been suspended for failure to supervise, pending the conclusion of an internal inquiry."

NatWest said it had already made a report to the Securities and Futures Authority (SFA) about another trader, who is understood to have carried out the mispricing to balance his position in a manner similar to the

attempts by Nick Leeson, the rogue trader who brought down Barings, to unwind previous trading errors. He has subsequently left the firm.

It is thought the suspended employee was the rogue trader's supervisor who would have been expected to notice irregularities of this sort. He would remain suspended, NatWest said, until an internal inquiry had been conducted into the events leading to the £50m hit.

One trader familiar with the interest rate options market said it would be relatively easy

to inflate profits by £50m and it was not thought that the problem necessarily pointed to more systematic fraud.

NatWest's shares are certain to come under pressure on Monday thanks to the timing of the announcement just after the market closed yesterday. Traders were speculating on a fall of at least 20p on yesterday's close of 758.5p.

Only three days ago, when NatWest announced profits of £1.12bn for 1996, down from £1.75bn, it made no mention of problems in its investment

banking arm. It did, however, point to a sharp rise in the staff costs from £510m to £726m.

Martin Owen, chief executive of NatWest Markets, said the higher figure reflected the costs of acquisitions but the coincidence of the rise with yesterday's announcement is sure to focus attention on the risks to financial institutions of staff whose pay packages are highly geared to performance-related bonuses.

The Bank of England is expected to draw attention to the dangers of the City's culture of

high bonuses when it issues a discussion paper on Monday on "Remuneration and Risk". It will say: "Many employees in the financial sector receive a significant part of their income in the form of profit-related bonuses. They therefore have a personal stake in the outcome of the activities they carry out on behalf of their employer. If these employees have significant discretion, then a firm's overall risk profile may be influenced by its employees' attitudes to risk."

The Bank's comments follow a diatribe earlier this week by

Donald Gordon, chairman of financial services group Liberty International, in which he warned of the risks inherent in "massive surge in over-incentivisation of personnel within the investment banking and capital markets sectors. This has led to a number of financial accidents and will undoubtedly lead to more dramatic catastrophes."

A spokesman for the SFA said: "I can confirm that NatWest Markets have reported these matters to us and we are studying them."

NatWest's debacle follows several other spectacular scandals involving rogue traders. Leeson managed to sink Barings, Britain's oldest merchant bank, virtually single-handed when his unsupervised futures trading racked up losses of over £800m. Leeson is in jail in Singapore following a conviction for unauthorised trading. Yassuo Hamanaka, Sumitomo's "Mr Copper", caused losses of over £1bn following years of unauthorised trading, during which he managed to manipulate the price of copper.

Morgan Stanley UK chief pockets £4m

David Osborne
New York

The Wall Street bonus bonanza, spawned by record profits earned in 1996, has crossed the water to London. Sir David Walker, a managing director at Morgan Stanley in the City, was paid no less than \$6.5m (£4m) last year according to filings made by the bank to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The information, submitted in connection with Morgan Stanley's planned merger with Dean Witter Discover, reveals that the bank paid three of its top officers more than \$10m each in 1996.

Sir David, who heads Morgan Stanley's European operations and is a former executive at the Bank of England, came in with the fourth biggest pay packet. Sir David began his career at the Treasury in 1961, and has held numerous other senior posts including being chairman of the Securities and Investments Board, chairman of Johnson Matthey Bankers, and deputy chairman of Lloyds Bank.

The filing offers rare official intelligence about the earnings of the top players on Wall Street last year. While New York has been buzzing for weeks about mega-bonuses, most banks have followed tradition in zipping up about the full extent of their generosity to their traders, analysts and investment bankers.

Filings from several other of the big institutions in coming weeks should, however, give additional glimpses into the sheer richness of last year's bonus handout. After a good year, it is not uncommon for top performers to receive lump bonus payments of up to eight times basic salary.

The package paid to Sir David, who oversees Morgan Stanley's European operations,

is likely to have been a mix of salary, a cash bonus and some restricted stock. He may not be able to realise the stock for several years. It none the less represents a doubling of what he was paid a year earlier.

The biggest winner at the firm was John Mack, 52, president of Morgan Stanley, who received \$10,677,489 for the year that ended 30 November—a 60 per cent increase on his earnings in 1995.

Mr Mack will also be president of the merged Morgan Stanley Dean Witter & Discover.

The chairman of Morgan Stanley, Richard Fisher, 60, who is close to retirement, received \$10,493,028. Meanwhile, Peter Karches, 45, who heads Morgan Stanley's securities business, received a package worth \$10.13m. Barton Biggs, the firm's economic guru with a strong following, made \$6.3m, only marginally less than Sir David.

All this beneficence follows Wall Street's stellar performance in 1996, when profits reached a record \$12.5bn. According to New York State estimates, bonuses paid out on Wall Street from last year may reach a jaw-dropping \$8.1bn, 30 per cent more than the previous high of \$6.2bn.

With 150,000 employed on Wall Street, that would average out at a one-off bonus payment of \$54,000 for every worker. In reality the tidal wave of dollars will have been skewed more heavily in favour of the most senior echelons of the Street and at the most successful banks.

Other firms that have made bonus headlines in recent weeks have included Bear Stearns, which paid \$18.8m to its chairman, Alan Greenberg, last year. The nearly 200 partners of Goldman Sachs—of which many are in London—are thought to have made between \$4m and \$8m each last year.

Bonuses cut after Peter Young fiasco

Bonuses at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell are believed to have been cut by as much as 20 per cent, a result of the £400m Peter Young fiasco last year and a sharp increase in staff numbers, writes Clifford German.

Although 1996 was a good year for most of the seven profit centres in the bank the bonus pool was reduced to take account of the activities of Mr Young.

The number of eligible individuals for bonuses also rose to more than 8,000 worldwide. Staffing numbers in London increased by several hundred to more than 3,000, reflecting the bank's expansion programme.

Biggest cuts in bonuses were in Morgan Grenfell Asset Man-

agement, the division which carried the can for Mr Young's losses.

The discretionary bonus system, though, did mean that some individuals received bigger cheques than in 1995. All staff are eligible, from secretaries who may get bonuses into four figures to senior managers whose entitlements will be measured in five and six figures.

One notable omission from the bonus payout list was Nicola Horlick, former head of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management's institutional arm, who forfeited her entitlement by resigning recently after a well-publicised bust-up with the management.



Wealthy on Wall Street: Sir David Walker, Morgan Stanley's head of European operations (above), registered the bank's fourth biggest pay packet, behind three of its top officers, who received more than \$10m each in 1996. The rare official intelligence of top players' Wall Street earnings was submitted in connection with Morgan's planned merger with Dean Witter Discover.

United may lose £90m on project

Michael Harrison

United Utilities yesterday became the latest British water company to run into trouble overseas after disclosing that it is facing a loss of up to £90m on a sewage project in the Thai capital of Bangkok.

The group, which owns North West Water and Norweb, said it was taking an £83m provision in this year's accounts after encountering further delays and problems on the £150m contract begun in 1993.

United Utilities had already taken a £7m charge against the contract in its 1994/95 results after the scale of the potential losses began to emerge. The provisions are equivalent to a third of last year's annual pre-tax profits of £272m. The shares fell 6p to 667.5p.

The company insisted yesterday, however, it had a strong case for recovering the additional costs and it intended to pursue its claims vigorously.

A spokesman said the delays and additional costs had resulted from changes in the specification of the contract to build a sewage treatment works and network in the Thai capital and the failure of the client, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, to provide proper site access.

Changes in government regulations had also limited the contractors to working only four hours a day in certain areas of the city and then only if the work was carried out at night and did not cause noise.

Negotiations over the cost and time overruns with the Governor of Bangkok and the central government had been progressing favourably as late as December. However, the Governor informed United Utilities last month that its claims were no longer valid, meaning the dispute will have to go to arbitration.

United Utilities has since pulled out of international construction activities, in common with other water companies which have suffered heavy losses, notably Thames Water which took a £100m charge last year.

Go-ahead axes 25% staff on Thames Trains

Michael Harrison

Another privatised rail operator yesterday announced plans for heavy staff cuts but pledged that the redundancies would not affect service levels.

Go-Ahead, the bus and rail group, is axing up to a quarter of the workforce in its Thames Trains franchise which operates between Paddington, Oxford, Windsor and Gatwick Airport. The company, which also operates the Thameslink franchise, is taking a £3.8m charge to cover 200 to 250 redundancies among the 1,000-strong workforce at Thames Trains.

But Go-Ahead's managing director, Martin Ballinger, promised that the staff reductions would not bring about a repeat of the chaos seen on South West Trains after it was taken over as part of the rail privatisation programme.

Stagecoach, which won the franchise last year, is facing heavy fines after having to cancel 450 services a week because of a shortage of drivers. South West Trains shed 70 of its

670 drivers last month under a voluntary redundancy scheme. Mr Ballinger said the redundancy programme at Thames Trains would be introduced progressively in a way that would not jeopardise services.

He was speaking as Go-Ahead reported a near doubling in pre-tax profits in the half year to the end of December to £12.2m and plans to expand its bus operations into continental Europe. The group, which operates 20 per cent of all bus services in London, said it was looking particularly at France and Scandinavia for expansion.

Go-Ahead was partnered by the French transport group VIA-GTI in its bid for Thameslink and was involved in the bidding race for Swesbus, Scandinavia's biggest bus operator, only to lose out to Stagecoach.

The group is also bidding to take on the Docklands Light Railway franchise in London's docklands as part of a strategy of strengthening further its presence in south-east England, the biggest public transport market in western Europe.

Cathcart drives off with £2m from Avis

Magnus Grimond

Alun Cathcart, the chairman and chief executive of Avis Europe, is set to receive his second £2m windfall in the space of a decade from the flotation of Europe's largest car hire operator.

Yesterday the group announced the 108p to 126p share price range for the group's stock market offering, its second in just over 10 years, which will value Avis at up to £734m, making it the biggest public offer this year.

Mr Cathcart made £2.2m before tax from the group's original stock market debut in 1986 and subsequent highly geared £900m sale in 1989 to a group that included D'Ieteren, Belgium's leading car importer, and General Motors.

The latest float will see him convert options into shares worth £2.37m at the 117p mid-range price. He is selling 60 per cent of his stake, which would raise £1.42m at the mid-price, mostly to cover tax liabilities,

and is locked into the remaining holding for 12 months. In all, 62 managers will end up with a stake worth between £6.3m and £7.3m as a result of the conversion of options granted at the equivalent of 1p each.

Mr Cathcart promised yesterday he would not be coming back to the market a third time. "I can guarantee, after the last four weeks, I have done my last Avis flotation. That I can guarantee," he said yesterday. Ten per cent of the offer,

which will raise a net £237m at the mid-price, will be reserved for individual investors, who will be entitled to membership of the Avis Europe Founders' Club. This will make them eligible for perks such as free extra days on Avis rentals, a hot line to automatic reservations and discounts on hire rates.

Individuals will have to apply for their shares through intermediaries such as banks, stockbrokers and four share shops. But Mr Cathcart said UK retail

demand was running at "very high levels". The retail offer closes on 21 March, with trading due to begin on 4 April.

Avis is estimating that operating profits rose a fifth to £101m in the 12 months to the end of last month. Merrill Lynch, one of the brokers to the issue, is forecasting that profits will rise from £56.8m to £89.7m at the pre-tax level in the year to next February, putting a p/e ratio of between 12 and 13.5 on the indicative pricing range.

Capital Corp delays results date

John Willcock

Capital Corporation, the casino group defending itself against a £191m hostile takeover bid from the London Clubs International (LCI), is postponing next Tuesday's scheduled announcement of 1996 results until the bidder produces a formal offer document.

"We intend to publish our defence document with our results, and we have 14 days to prepare the defence from the time we receive LCI's offer document," a Capital spokesman said yesterday.

The spokesman said that there had been "a deafening silence" from LCI since it launched its 47-for-100 all-shares bid 11 days ago. An LCI spokesman responded that "the timing of the offer document is a sensitive decision and not one we can comment on".

Both companies refused to comment on market speculation that Ladbrooke, which announces its 1996 results next Thursday, was in talks with either party. Rank has also been mentioned as a possible bidder for Capital. LCI has three weeks from after making its bid before it has

to produce the offer document. Capital's shares closed down 6p at 205p yesterday while LCI added 0.5p to 379p.

One analyst commented: "Capital's price says the market is looking for a higher bid, perhaps with a bit of cash. It looks like a straight argument over price. Mercury Asset Management (MAM) owns 17 per cent in both companies, so they'll have a big say in it."

Capital's price was languishing at 155p before LCI's announcement, following a profit warning a month ago that profits would fall to around £8.75m

from £13m. Capital incurred £3.5m costs due to closure of the Colony Club last year for a £6.5m refurbishment.

Capital, led by its chairman Gary Nesbitt, has also suffered several embarrassments over the past year. Last summer half a dozen croquetiers were fired and a customer barred from their casino after a firing ring was discovered. In another incident, Hambros, the company's advisers, called in accountants from Price Waterhouse to investigate discrepancies in Capital's wine purchases, going back before 1993, when the company floated.

Iveco to close Langley factory

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Iveco-Ford, the truck-making joint venture between Fiat and Ford, yesterday confirmed plans to close its historic Langley plant near Slough in Berkshire with the loss of 450 jobs.

Iveco said it took the move, another blow to the already shrinking British commercial vehicle industry, because of overcapacity in the European truck market. Alan Fox, the chairman, said demand for medium-sized lorries had shrunk by 40 per cent in the past 20 years.

Production will shift to Brescia in Italy, a move the Transport and General Workers Union said amounted to "social dumping".

The union said it mirrored Ford's recent decision to shift long-term production of the best-selling Escort from its Halewood plant on Mersey, side, involving the loss of about 1,300 jobs.

The Langley factory, built 90 years ago, was used to make Hawker Hurricane fighters during the 1930s and 1940s and started producing trucks 35 years ago. Workers build the Cargo truck, which last year took 20 per cent of the UK commercial vehicle market, making it Britain's best-selling lorry.

Ford sold its UK truck-building operations to Iveco in 1986.

Production at the site has been declining for several years. In 1996 it made just 7,777 Cargos, of which a fifth were exported, compared with a full production capacity of about 20,000 vehicles. In its best year, it managed to make fewer than 17,000 trucks.

Another factor in Iveco's decision is likely to be the value of the 65-acre "Langley" site, which Ford owns and could sell for more than £50m, depending on whether the local council grants planning permission.

The news came as Renault, the troubled French car giant, announced plans to close its factory in Belgium. Renault said the move would cut its costs by £850m (£95m) a year in the face of a huge drop in French car sales. However the move-off cost of closing the plant would total £12bn, Renault added.

Demand for cars "has slumped after France eased a scheme to subsidise private buyers willing to scrap their old models. Renault and the privately owned Peugeot group remain annual in selling almost half their production at their home market.

Workers at the Belgian plant were said to be planning to strike on Monday.

STOCK MARKETS									
FTSE 100		Dow Jones		Nikkei		HSE 250		FTSE 250	
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10
4339.20	+9.30	7090	+0.0	13020	+0.0	4829.20	+2.20	2146.90	+4.10

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling		UK medium gill		US long bond		Money Market Rates		Bond Yields	
0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term	Long Term
0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term	Long Term
0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term	Long Term
0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term	Long Term
0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term	Long Term
0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term	Long Term
0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term	Long Term
0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term	Long Term
0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term	Long Term

CURRENCIES									
£/\$		£/DM		£/Y		Pound		Dollar	
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago
1.6271	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	1.5351	-0.08%	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Year Ago

chairman, Alan Fox, the chairman, said demand for medium-sized lorries had fallen by 40 per cent in the past 20 years.

Production will shift to Brescia in Italy, a move the Transport and General Workers' Union said amounted to "social dumping".

The union said it mirrored Ford's recent decision to shift production of its best-selling Escort from its Halewood plant on Merseyside, involving the loss of about 1,300 jobs.

The Langley factory, built 90 years ago, was used to make the Ford's first mass-produced car during the 1930s and 1940s. It has started producing trucks 35 years ago. Workers built the Cargo truck, which last year took 20 per cent of the UK commercial vehicle market, making

which Ford owns and could sell for more than £50m; depending on whether the local council goes ahead with the permission.

The move came at a time, analysts said, when Renault, the troubled French car giant, announced plans to close its factory in Belgium. Renault said the move would cut its costs by Fr80m (95m) a year in the face of a huge drop in French car sales. However the move-off cost would be paid by Renault, not total Fr12bn, Renault argued.

Demand for cars has slumped after France ended a scheme to subsidise private buyers willing to scrap their old models. Renault and the privately owned Peugeot group were major players in selling cars at half their market value to their home market.

Workers at the Belgian plant were said to be planning to



JEREMY WARNER

At best, Gordon Brown is going to be regarded by financial markets as an unknown quantity, at worst a Labour chancellor of the old school, willing to play fast and loose with the economy to advance the Party's social priorities.

An independent Bank is Labour's litmus test

The conversion of Labour to the cause of sound public finances and low inflation reached a point of no return this week with the announcement by Gordon Brown, the shadow chancellor, of an inflation target of 2.5 per cent and new monetary arrangements to back it up. With this statement, Labour seems to have been both baptised and confirmed into the faith all at the same time. Or has it?

What Labour says it will do and what it will actually do when in government are likely to be two very different things. Belief in the new religion is one thing, being a good Christian quite another.

On one level, Labour's refusal to contemplate giving the Bank of England immediate independence in the determination of monetary policy is an entirely practical piece of decision making. To do so would require legislation, and that's going to take a minimum of a year to enact. So even if Mr Brown did not believe the Bank had to "earn" its independence with a period of good behaviour on probation, some kind of transitional arrangement would have to be put in place.

Even so, it is hard not to sense in Mr Brown's manoeuvring a deeper purpose, for part of the intention of these arrangements is to achieve a situation where all risk of conflict between chancellor and Bank in the determination of policy is removed. Mr Brown calls it "depersonalising" the process

but there's actually a bit more to it than getting rid of the media ritual of the Ken and Eddie show. He wants to arrive at a point where the two sides, he and the Bank, are able to agree on policy in nearly all conceivable circumstances.

While this seems a reasonable enough ambition, the effect may well be a rather laxer monetary policy than would otherwise be the case. There is generally compromise and fudge behind the outward appearance of harmony and this setup seems like a formula for just that. In a non-adversarial system, the balance in policy will always be towards the soft option. At this early stage in Britain's attempt to establish credibility as a low inflation economy, is this really the right approach?

To claim that lax policy is actually Mr Brown's purpose here may be to exaggerate the argument, but this could well be the effect. The Bank will be required to set up a formal monetary policy committee to guide the Governor on his advice, which in turn will be half staffed by seconded outsiders. While technically these people will not be Labour placemen - the Court of the Bank of England will make the appointments - in practice they will be: in the real world the Bank is not going to opt for any one Mr Brown doesn't approve of. It can be stated with some certainty, for instance, that Patrick Minford will not be on the short list.

The chancellor therefore maintains an effective right of veto.

The Bank has managed to win one important concession - that all these appointments will be established experts in the field of monetary policy. The powerful vested interests of organised capital and labour don't automatically get a seat at the table. Even so, it can readily be seen that the effect could easily be to dilute and homogenise the decision-making process.

And just in case the committee is still prone to err on the side of caution, notwithstanding the outsiders, the chancellor is proposing to bolster his position through the appointment of a powerful "council of economists" who will work to him at the Treasury. Should the two sides perchance disagree, there is not much doubt who would have the upper hand.

Some of what Mr Brown proposes seems entirely reasonable, given the traditional suspicion with which financial markets hold Labour governments. Could Mr Brown get away with defying the Bank of England's advice, in the same way as Kenneth Clarke has? Certainly not in his first year or two. The markets would wreak a lasting revenge, even though Mr Brown, like Mr Clarke a couple of years ago, might with the passage of time be proved to have been right all along.

The truth of the matter is that, at best, Mr Brown is going to be regarded by financial

markets as an unknown quantity, at worst a Labour chancellor of the old school, quite willing to play fast and loose with the economy if that is the price that has to be paid to advance the Party's social priorities. So in that sense Mr Brown is quite justified in setting himself up with a mechanism that allows him to exercise his judgement without having to pay a ghastly penalty for doing so.

But here's the rub. Mr Brown's judgement is all too likely to be of the variety that factors in a whole host of other criteria besides rigid adherence to the inflation target. Maintaining growth is one. Unemployment another. And, very pertinent at the moment, a third might be the exchange rate. I don't want to over egg the argument here, for in many respects it is hard to fault what Mr Brown is proposing. Quite a bit of what I've been saying might seem unduly cynical and nit picking. But the claim that these arrangements are a significant advance on what went before, an evolutionary leap on the way to full independence of the Bank, is a very questionable one. Stripped of its rhetoric, what's proposed here is merely the old system in new clothing. The decision will remain the chancellor's: the rest is just a way of making those choices seem as credible as possible.

As for the insistence that the Bank needs first to "earn" its independence, the shadow

chancellor is surely kidding, isn't he? Responsibility for the disastrous, compromised nature of policy over the past 30 years lies not with the Bank but with successive generations of chancellors. Set against such a record, the Bank's error of judgement in advising on an interest rate hike two years ago when none proved necessary should scarcely register at all. That hasn't stopped it being constantly cited to support the case against independence. Since when has erring on the side of caution been an offence greater than that of recklessness? Yet that is what Mr Brown implies when he talks about the Bank having to earn its independence.

Mr Brown holds out the promise of independence, but will he actually deliver? Having already tied his hands so thoroughly on tax and spend, will he really want to surrender monetary policy as well? If Labour takes us into monetary union, it will have no option. Maastricht demands central bank independence, subordinate to the even more distant independence of the European Central Bank. Mr Brown's scope for painting on the broader economic canvass would be more restricted than ever. The issues Mr Brown is grappling with over domestic monetary policy are magnified 10-times over in European monetary union. His failure fully to embrace independence for the Bank of England may be a harbinger of things to come on Europe's too.

Newcastle United looks to score £50m from float

Tom Stevenson
City Editor

Newcastle United asked the City to pay for its £50m five-year spending spree yesterday, announcing a stock market flotation that will value the football club at between £172m and £193m. The float, which will raise £47.4m of new funds for the club, at least 10 per cent from the private investors who are currently flocking to invest in football clubs, has already been a bonanza for the company's directors.

Newcastle's prospectus showed the company's two joint chief executives and its finance director have shared more than £1m in one-off payments "in recognition of the part they have played in the recent development of Newcastle United".

Freddie Fletcher, the former commercial director of Glasgow Rangers and chief executive for the past five years, received £750,000 from Newcastle's major shareholder, north-east property magnate Sir John Hall. Mark Corbridge, the 33-year-old former Rothschild banker who is now joint chief executive pocketed £300,000 despite being with the club for less than

a year. Jo Dixon, finance director, was paid £100,000.

The directors are also to be paid guaranteed bonuses regardless of the performance of the club or company. Both chief executives will be paid basic salaries of £160,000, but have a bonus worth between 50 and 100 per cent of that figure written into their contracts.

Sir Kenneth Harrison, the former Rolls Royce chief executive who was named as Newcastle's non-executive chairman yesterday, said the proceeds of the float would be used to pay off £21m of debt. A further £12m has been set aside to fund future investments on players and the club's infrastructure. The club is rebuilding the north-east's sleeping giant, most famously last year with the £15m acquisition of Alan Shearer, the England striker. From beneath the spectre of relegation to the old Third Division, Newcastle's recovery, funded out of the deep pockets of Sir John Hall, brought it within a whisker of winning the Premiership last season.

The company said yesterday the funds would not be used for a proposed new stadium, for which it is seeking planning permission. It did, however, put a price tag on the development of the existing St James's Park site into an indoor arena, of £90m. No details of where that money would come from were given.

The heavy costs of building and maintaining a top squad was spelled out in yesterday's prospectus. Newcastle made £29m from its four main income streams of gate receipts, television fees, sponsorship and the sale of branded products in the year to July last year. But that turnover was wiped out by operating expenses, mainly players' salaries, of £23.1m and transfer fees worth a massive £29.9m. That resulted in an operating loss of £24m and brought the aggregate operating loss for the past five years to £37.9m.

Mr Fletcher disputed the claim that investors might be concerned by the abrupt departure from his two previous jobs of Newcastle's manager Kenny Dalglish, who took over recently from Kevin Keegan. He attempted to reassure potential investors by saying Dalglish had



Bonus winners: (from left) Directors Jo Dixon, Mark Corbridge and Freddie Fletcher (right) have shared more than £1m in pay-offs already
Photograph: Adrian Dennis

signed a three-and-a-half year contract and would be in receipt of unspecified share options. No players are to get options.

According to yesterday's prospectus, 40 million Newcastle shares will be issued at between 120p and 135p each to raise

£51m before expenses. Assuming a price in the middle of that range the shares are being sold at 22.4 times earnings per share, as adjusted for transfer fees and other exceptional items. The company said it would have paid a dividend of 1.5p a share

had it been listed for the whole of the year to July 1997.

The retail offer closes on 20 March. The institutional book-building process ends the following day with pricing to be announced on 4 March and dealing due to start on 2 April.

IN BRIEF

• A Treasury-backed Bill giving building societies extra powers and limited protection against hostile takeovers was yesterday brought before Parliament, ending months of doubts as to whether it would be introduced. The Building Societies Bill seeks to remove restrictions on societies' commercial activities, allowing them to offer a wider range of financial services. Societies will now be able to make up to 25 per cent of loans that are not fully secured on residential property. Until now, only a tiny proportion could be for anything other than mortgages. The Bill will also strip the five-year protection against takeover from any demutualising society which is itself involved in a bid to take over another company.

• FKI is spending £21m on reorganising its electrical engineering division, which includes the Hawker Siddeley Electric Power group and Marelli Motori. The company said the reorganisation was being made to "take advantage of their combined strengths". It said the impact of the recent strength of sterling on overseas earnings had been largely balanced by a relatively strong US market.

• Richards, the specialist engineering group, warned that its profit margins in the UK were being eroded by the continuing strength of sterling and as a result it had to put its Northern Ireland spinning plants on short-time working. The warning, which came at the annual general meeting, was blamed on the near 20 per cent appreciation of sterling against the Belgian franc.

• Cambridge Antibody Technology yesterday announced plans to raise £35m in the latest of a growing stream of stock market flotations in the biotechnology sector. The company, which was started in the bedroom of joint founder and chief executive David Chiswell, has developed what it claims is technology for isolating human monoclonal antibodies, used both in making drugs and in screening other compounds to test their suitability as drugs. The group is expected to be capitalised at around £90m by the mainly institutional placing, with dealings due to start on 25 March.

• China had a 1996 trade surplus with the US of \$10.54bn (£6.5bn), the China Daily reported, quoting a customs report. The report said total trade between the two countries in 1996 rose 4.9 per cent year-on-year to \$42.84bn. Exports to the US last year totalled \$26.7bn, up 7.9 per cent, while US imports totalled \$16.2bn, up 0.2 per cent. However, according to US data, America's US trade deficit with China was \$39.5bn last year.

• SmithKline Beecham has convinced a key panel of the US Food and Drug Administration to recommend approval of its Coreg heart treatment for sale in the US. Last May, the panel refused to approve the drug, saying it needed more information from the British drugs group.

BA backs plans for 600-seat aircraft

Michael Harrison

British Airways yesterday gave its backing to the launch of a new generation of super-jumbo jets, forecasting that 600-seat aircraft would be flying in significant numbers early in the next century.

In evidence to the Heathrow Terminal 5 planning inquiry, BA's chief executive, Bob Ayling, said the airline remained committed to introducing larger and more cost-efficient aircraft.

"We believe there is a need for such aircraft to be introduced in the early years of the next decade. In our opinion, whilst the phasing of fleet plans in the short term may be reassessed, there is no basis for assuming that larger aircraft, including 600-seaters, will not be flying in significant numbers by the time Terminal 5 is fully operational," said Mr Ayling.

His comments follow Boeing's decision to shelve the \$7bn (£4.3bn) development of a 550-seat successor to the 747 jumbo jet and remarks earlier this week by British Aerospace, one of the partners in Airbus, casting doubt on how committed the European aircraft consortium was to launching its own super jumbo, code-named the A3XX.

Ironically, it was BA's decision not to be a launch customer for the planned Boeing 747-600X which ultimately forced the US aircraft manufacturer to abandon the project.

However, Mr Ayling said that BA's long-term predictions were "unaffected" by Boeing's decision, indicating that it remained keen on adding super-jumbos to its fleet.

House shortage forces up prices

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

House prices were boosted by a shortage of properties for sale last month, Nationwide Building Society reported yesterday. Prices have now climbed 10 per cent from their trough in 1995.

The increase in Nationwide's index was 0.7 per cent in February, about the same as the recent monthly average.

That took them to a level 8.5 per cent higher than a year earlier.

The average house price in the UK reached £55,621, according to Nationwide, up from £51,256 a year earlier.

House price inflation has

now been running at above 8 per cent for four months, although the building society is forecasting a rise of 7 per cent for 1997 as a whole.

Paul Sanderson, head of research, said: "Survey evidence still strongly suggests shortages of property for sale remain a problem in many areas, causing upward pressure on prices in certain areas of the market and frustrating many potential buyers."

These shortages, rather than weaker demand or uncertainty ahead of the general election, probably explained why there had been tentative signs of a slowdown in housing market activity, he said.

Both building societies and banks have reported a small decline in the number of loans approved in January.

The British Bankers' Association, representing the main high street banks, said yesterday that the number fell from 32,234 in December to 31,637 in January. This was slightly larger than the normal seasonal decline.

While some economists are predicting house price inflation in double digits later this year as the economy continues to strengthen, others point to the few weaker figures as evidence that the housing recovery has reached a plateau.

For example, the Land Reg-

istry reported a decline in the number of property sales recorded by 34,000 to 230,198 in the final quarter of last year, in contrast to inland Revenue statistics showing that the number of property transactions in December were a third higher than a year earlier.

However, Tim Sweeney, director general of the BBA, said net mortgage lending strengthened "appreciably" in January.

"All told, the major banks' mortgage figures for the month provide support for the view that the early months of 1997 will see further sustainable recovery in housing market activity," he said.

ScotAm confirms three firm bids

Clifford Gorman

Scottish Amicable the Stirling-based mutual insurance group said it had received just three firm bids, from Abbey National, the Prudential and AMP by the deadline of noon yesterday.

There will now be two weeks of secret bilateral bargaining between the bidders, the ScotAm management and their financial advisers SG Warburg. ScotAm will then take a further two weeks before recommending the winning bid to policyholders.

Jack Birney, managing director of Warburg's corporate finance division, said last night that no details of the individual offers would be released without the consent of the bidder.

Discussions over the next fortnight will concentrate on obtaining the maximum value for policyholders. This could involve around the relative merits of cash, shares, or additional bonuses added to the ultimate value of

the policies. Preserving jobs in Scotland, however, will be only a secondary consideration. The offers differ significantly in detail, but headline figures are misleading, Warburg said yesterday. Cash in hand is not the same as a loan.

Abbey National's initial offer made in January consisted of £400m in cash or shares for ScotAm's 1.1 million policyholders plus anything from £700m to £1bn for the embedded value of the policies. Abbey National said it was willing to increase its sighting offer but it is still not known if it has done so.

The Prudential's last public statement on its offer promised £400m in cash and £400m in bonuses for policyholders, plus a loan of £1.1bn from the Pru's life fund into the ScotAm fund. Prudential also promises to make ScotAm the focus of its operations, selling policies through independent financial advisers.

EMU 'delay' fears force banks to defend the lira

Yvette Cooper

Central banks in Italy and Spain were forced to intervene in currency markets yesterday to support the lira and peseta after rumours that Germany was about to announce a delay in the timetable for monetary union.

Jitters that a single currency might be delayed resulted in dealers selling Italian bonds and buying German debt instead. There were repercussions for bonds and currencies across Europe.

Traders said the Bank of Italy and the Bank of Spain both intervened to defend the lira and the peseta against the mark.

The lira fell to its lowest level against the ERM in November. Rumours that the Bundesbank was about to announce a two-year delay to EMU were denied by Bundesbank officials. Nevertheless, traders' confidence in a broad-based euro beginning in 1999 continued to

fall, and Italy bore the brunt of the market reaction. Italian futures contracts ended 2.29 points down at 127.50. Spanish, Swedish, Finnish and Irish government bonds softened too.

The mark strengthened against the lira and the peseta during the day. Traders said the Bank of Italy intervened when the exchange rate reached 998.50 lira to the mark. The currency fell during the day through the psychological barrier of 1,000 lira per mark to reach 1,001.50, its lowest level since it rejoined the ERM at a central parity of 990 lira to the mark on 25 November last year.

Some dealers suggested that the rumours were begun by traders in an attempt to get the markets moving. But jitters were also fuelled by Bundesbank board member Peter Schmidhuber, who said yesterday morning that "hectic" attempts to meet the deficit criteria were causing only the appearance of convergence.



SUNDERLAND PLC

INTERIM REPORT FOR SIX MONTHS ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 1996

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT
On 24 December 1996 Sunderland PLC ("Sunderland") successfully listed on The London Stock Exchange and I am pleased to announce our first set of interim results as a listed company. The results relate solely to the business of Sunderland Association Football Club Limited ("the Club") and reflect the period prior to the listing.

During the period under review, the Club began its first season within the Premier League. In anticipation of this we strengthened our playing squad over the period and have made an admirable start to life in the Premier League. Today we are placed 14th in the league with 12 games remaining. Although there are some tough fixtures still remaining, we are well placed to fulfil our objective this season of retaining Premier League membership.

Turnover for the half year was £5,176,000 (1995 - £2,513,000) an increase of 106% and profit before tax was £1,082,000 (1995 - loss £1,640,000) a turnaround of £2,722,000. These vastly improved figures reflect, primarily, increased ticket sales as well as improved sponsorship and TV income as a Premier League club. The charge for players' transfer fees in the period has been reduced by £147,000 due to the sale of players. The results incorporate only seven of our nineteen home league matches of the season and are in line with our expectations and the profit forecast included in the Prospectus.

As stated in the Prospectus, the Board is not declaring an interim dividend but expects to propose a final dividend in respect of the year ending 31 May 1997 of not less than 3.2p net per share.

Last week we exchanged contracts on the sale of the freehold of Roker Park for £1,300,000 net of demolition costs. Completion will take place in our next financial year. Construction of our new 42,000 seater stadium is on schedule to be completed towards the end of June 1997 giving us sufficient time to complete fitting out prior to the opening home game of the 1997/98 season. Our marketing efforts are progressing extremely well.

R S Murray Chairman

28 February 1997

GROUP PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

	Unaudited six months to 30 November 1996	Unaudited six months to 30 November 1995	Audited year to 31 May 1996
Turnover	5,176	2,513	7,169
Cost of sales	(1,778)	(1,854)	(3,762)
Match expenses	(1,211)	(897)	(2,302)
Ground and other direct expenses	(2,589)	(2,551)	(6,064)
Gross profit/loss	2,187	(38)	1,102
Administrative expenses	(809)	(757)	(1,552)
Operating profit/loss before players' transfer fees	1,378	(795)	(450)
Players' transfer fees	(331)	(178)	(1,812)
Operating profit/loss on ordinary activities before interest and taxation	1,047	(1,580)	(1,262)
Net interest receivable/payable	38	(60)	(106)
Profit/loss on ordinary activities before taxation	1,082	(1,640)	(2,368)
Taxation	(56)	-	-
Profit/loss for the period	1,026	(1,640)	(2,368)
Earnings/losses per share	19.2p	(58.6p)	(84.6p)

- Notes:
1. Sunderland PLC acquired the entire issued share capital of Sunderland Association Football Club Limited ("the Club") by way of a share for share exchange on 25 October 1996, prior to that date and up to 30 November 1996 Sunderland PLC did not trade. The only previous financial information for the Club is the 1995/96 financial statement, the financial information included in the Prospectus of the Club.
2. The financial information for the six months ended 30 November 1995 and 30 November 1996 compares with the 1995/96 financial statement of the Club. The financial information for the year ended 31 May 1996 is based on the statutory accounts for the year then ended. Full accounts for that period on which the auditors made an unqualified report have been delivered to the Registrar of Companies, and do not contain a statement under Section 237(2) of the Companies Act 1985.
3. The interim accounts have been prepared using the same accounting policies as the 31 May 1996 annual statutory accounts.
4. Taxation has been estimated at the rate expected to be incurred in the full year.
5. In accordance with details set out in the Prospectus, no interim dividend has been declared.
6. Earnings per ordinary 1p share in Sunderland PLC have been calculated on the profit/loss of the Company for the period and the equivalent number of shares in issue during the comparable period.
7. The net assets at 30 November 1996 amounted to £3,953,000. If the net assets at that date are adjusted to reflect the estimated net proceeds of the flotation then the net assets at 30 November 1996 would have amounted to £11,195,000.
8. This announcement is not being posted to shareholders. Shareholders, or members of the general public, can however obtain a copy of the announcement from the Company's registered office: Sunderland PLC, Roker Park, Sunderland SR6 9SW.

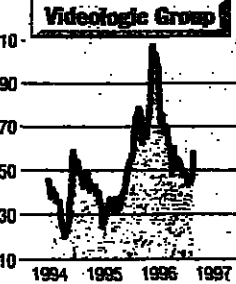
market report / shares

Data Bank

FTSE 100	4308.3	-30.9
FTSE 250	4654.4	-8.6
FTSE 350	2314.0	-12.9
SEAQ VOLUME	831.3m shares,	
	47,446 bargains	
Gifts Index	n/a	

Share spotlight

share price, pence



PowerVR news seems to defy the logic of disclosure

MARKET REPORT

PATRICK TOOHER

This may sound a bit naive, but aren't shareholders entitled to equal access to price-sensitive information?

If a quoted company has an announcement to make about material things like current trading, changes in senior management, or a significant deal it must notify the Stock Exchange. Otherwise a false market could be created in the shares.

But yesterday investors would have scoured their screens in vain to find out why shares in Videologic, the computer chip designer, had suddenly flickered into life. They closed 10p higher at 60.5p on hefty volume of 2.7 million shares, valuing the company at £90m. By the close of play, though, there was no still news, no nothing.

Thankfully the Internet - that indispensable information source - came to the rescue, carrying a press release dated Thursday, 27 February

- bearing the headline "NEC invests \$25m in PowerVR Games Program".

In a joint statement Japan's leading producer of microchips revealed it would spend \$25m (£15m) this year developing VideoLogic's Power VR chip which enables personal computers to run 3D graphics.

There was also a broad hint that several other big computer companies would take orders for the chips this year.

All interesting stuff, but why weren't shareholders told? VideoLogic argues some of the information about the NEC deal was already known and that it decided against making an announcement to the Stock Exchange after talking to SBC Warburg, its broker and financial adviser. For its part, the Stock Exchange is understood to be investigating an apparent breach of disclosure rules.

VideoLogic's shares could hit 75p on the latest news and



Keith Woolcock, electronics analyst at Merrill Lynch, thinks the shares remain a steal on forecast profits of £5.4m for the year to March 1998, implying a p/e ratio of 16.

Those electronics companies that actually bothered to tell the Stock Exchange what was going on also fared well. Shares in Eidos, the computer games group, soared 75p to a record high of 104.5p on news of a third-quarter pre-tax profit of £7.6m versus a £1m loss in the corresponding period last year.

Also breaking new ground was accountancy software firm Sage, whose shares jumped 31p to 617.5p after securing a foothold in the German soft-

ware market - the largest in Europe - with a £40.1m acquisition. Wall Street influences dominated sentiment for most of the session after traders shrugged off Labour's easy win in the Wirral South by-election.

The FTSE 100 managed to stay above the psychologically significant 4,300 mark, but closed just off the day's low at 4308.3, down 30.9.

The main talking point was NatWest, whose shares are set to open sharply lower on Monday after announcing shortly after the market closed that it would take a £50m charge against first-half results after discovering errors in its interest rate options book. A senior

trader has been suspended pending the conclusion of an internal inquiry. Earlier, NatWest's shares had closed 0.5p lower at 758.5p.

Shares in drugs group Zeneca tumbled following news that the US Food and Drug Administration had issued a warning to the company following an inspection at one of Zeneca's plants in Maclefield, Cheshire.

The FDA said it would not recommend approval of any new applications which list Zeneca as the manufacturer of sterile pharmaceuticals until the problems identified at the plant had been resolved. The sterile manufacturing area subject to the FDA inspection is a sophisticated plant responsible exclusively for a cancer treatment called Zoladex.

Zeneca's shares crashed by as much as 50.5p before recovering to close at 1805p, down 33.5p on the day.

Banks with interests in the Far East stood out. Standard Chartered hit another all-time high, up 26p at 841.5p, while HSBC firmed 19p to 1582p ahead of Monday's results.

Television stocks were again an active sector. Speculation that a bid was about to be launched for Yorkshire Television sent its shares 30p higher at 1272.5p with Granada, the obvious candidate, 21.25p weaker at 908.75p as a result.

HIV's good run continued on reports that it was forging a closer production alliance with Warner brothers of the US. The shares ended 11p to the good at 361.5p ahead of next week's results.

Shares in Heavys motored ahead, jumping for top slot in the list of FTSE 250 advances with a 32.5p gain to 559p, after the car dealership and transport group unveiled 1996 profits of £33.3m versus £25.3m last time.

Taking Stock

Brokers Grainger Davies likes the look of Low & Bonar, the Dundee-based packaging group. Relief that respectable results were accompanied by an encouraging trading statement has seen the shares

low of 388.5p to last night's close of 449.5p, up 1p. Management is keen to accelerate the internal growth rate while a robust balance sheet provides ample scope to make bolt-on acquisitions.

Grainger says the forward p/e ratio of 11 is too conservative and the shares should outperform as investors regain confidence.

Alan-Best Concurrent Technologies, the computer design and production company, pleased the market by increasing 1996 profits by 129 per cent to £1.3m and paying a maiden dividend of 6.1p. The shares leapt 7p to 25p.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: ex rights = ex-dividend as ex-all to limited; Securities Market's Suspended = Fully Paid; p/n = Paid Shares; A.M. Stock = American Stock.

Source: FT Information

The Independent Index

The Index shows you to access real-time share prices by phone from London Stock Exchange. Simply dial 0203 123 123, and when prompted do so enter the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0203 1233 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

Anyone with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of the Independent Index, please contact the FT Information Centre on 0203 123 123.

Calls cost 50p per minute (daytime). Call charges exclude VAT.

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

UK Stock Market Report: 01

UK Company News: 02

Foreign Exchange: 03

FTSE 100 - Real-time

Foreign Exchange Rates as of 2/2/93

[illegible]

Manifesto of a Coke can rebel

Joanne Muggeridge has shocked the badminton world. Nick Duxbury reports

We've all wanted to do it at some stage and next to tiffing the tuss, pouring a cold, sticky liquid over his head has its merits when the red mist of frustration takes hold. Joanne Muggeridge, the badminton player once sponsored by the equipment company Headstrong, employed the real thing in a way Coca-Cola would not approve of to end abruptly a meeting with the England manager, Steve Baddeley, in his Milton Keynes office. The incident eight days ago has passed into sporting folklore, but the 27-year-old Muggeridge, having spectacularly thrown open the door marked "Bad Girl of British Badminton", is set to be as shut just as quickly. However, it may take time.

All Muggeridge, a double Commonwealth Games gold medal winner and twice an Olympian, wants to do is play for England. Baddeley wants the best players in his squad and Muggeridge, at No 30, is Britain's highest-ranked woman singles player in the world. So why the spat?

For a start, the Catford-born professional was feeling the pinch, having been dropped from the elite 28-strong squad, who have their travel and hotel bills paid for by the Badminton Association of England. A trip to the forthcoming Swiss Open will set her back at least £500. Lottery cash is also about to be splashed

around and only Securicor's generosity is keeping her on the road. Baddeley, who doubts as the director of elite play, took action after Muggeridge missed two grand slam events through injury and doubts grew about her fitness. Elite players are obliged to play in the top domestic events and the axe fell after she withdrew from the December tournament.

"I couldn't believe it when I was told I'd been dropped," said Muggeridge, whose claim that her overall fitness is fine is backed by a semi-final place in the Indian Open in January. "When you are injured it's bad enough not playing, but the mind being told you're out of the squad, I couldn't play in the September grand slam because of a thigh muscle injury and in December it was my Achilles. There was no question of my shirking my responsibilities to England. I am fit and I wanted to play those matches."

The grand slam tour arrived at Mansfield last weekend and Muggeridge asked for a pre-event pow-wow with Baddeley. It did not go well. "He told me that even if I played at Mansfield I wouldn't be back in the squad. Outside in the car I had all my kit packed ready to play the next day. I was so upset." It was at this point that a fizzy substance came into contact with Baddeley's hair. "I was just so frustrated. He



Dogged by controversy: Joanne Muggeridge, with Brontë, at home this week

Photograph: Robert Hallam

didn't move, or say anything. He was quite surprised," said Muggeridge, who, having also been given a letter which relieved her of "all responsibilities and obligations" to the squad, founced off to Germany to get match practice for the All England Championships which start in Birmingham on Tuesday week. The decision by Baddeley, whose reflexes when his Commonwealth gold, to remain immobile was the correct one, according to Maryanne Henchy, the BAE spokeswoman. "He didn't react. It would have been a mistake if he had, but afterwards he was extremely upset," she said. On the question of Muggeridge's post-dunking image,

Henchy added: "Joanne is no more difficult to handle than some others, but she has her own views and is a very strong-minded person." Few olive branches have been waved to play this week, but Baddeley has indicated that if Muggeridge allows her training to be monitored by the BAE and if there is an improvement in her fitness, she could be reinstated. "We are not doubting her ability," he said. "She could be in the world's top 20."

A thaw of sorts continued with her response to a letter of support for the manager signed by 17 of the elite squad, including her England doubles partner, Julie Bradbury. The players "wholeheartedly" backed Baddeley for demanding that Muggeridge plays in grand slam events, follows a strict training regime and does not play in the German *Bundesliga* when required to play in England. The letter went on: "We hope that Joanne will recognise her misjudgement and do her best to remedy the situation, for she is a talented player who we would like to see train hard and eventually fulfil her potential."

In the latest of almost daily faxes to national newspapers which have kept the brouhaha going, Muggeridge replied that in hindsight her "actions last weekend were capable of misinterpretation by my fellow players and this I deeply regret." She will play in the next grand slam at Redbridge in April whether or not she is reinstated, but "the withdrawal of funding and support is so fundamental to my ability to compete at the highest level that I must continue to pursue the avenues of appeal open to me to remedy my present position."

British best seek lift-off for Turin

Athletics
MIKE ROWBOTTOM

Britain's best cross-country runners - with a couple of significant exceptions, assemble on a course next to Luton Airport tomorrow, all of them seeking lift-off to the World Championships in Turin in three weeks' time. Britain's success at the European Championships before Christmas, where Jon Brown won the men's individual title and the women took the team silver medal, has raised the profile of a sport Brown will not be running the trials, choosing instead to train at high altitude in Vancouver. Britain's top woman, Paula Radcliffe, will also train at altitude in Albuquerque.

"We never expected Jon to be at the trials," Dave Clarke, the British team manager, said. "It was the same with Paula. We are in regular contact with both of them. Cross-country is very good at trying to support people in this country. We are desperate to field our top athletes so that we can do as well as possible."

Other than these two, however, and the current national champion Jon Nuttall, who is making recovery from a shin problem, which is likely to prevent him competing in Turin, all the other leading exponents will be at Luton. They include Andrew Pearson, the 1995 European bronze medalist, Keith Cullen, last year's trials winner who reached the Olympic steeplechase semi-final, Rob Denmark the 28-year-old Commonwealth 1,000 metres champion, Lucy Elliott, who established herself as No 2 to Radcliffe this season with four

top seven placings in International Amateur Athletic Federation World Challenge races, and Andrea Whitcombe, one of the European silver medalists along with Elliott.

"In a funny way, the races will be better with Jon and Paula because they will be that much closer," Clarke said. "It is a wonderful opportunity for someone to come and make a name for themselves."

That someone might be Christian Stephenson, the 22-year-old from Cardiff who made the top 30 in the 1993 World Junior Championships.

What would delight every neutral would be the sight of Glyn Thomas forcing his way into the team which will be his first serious race since 1995.

Thomas, a Coventry lecturer, had two major operations on his heart last year to seal a valve. Since then he has made a remarkable recovery to such an extent that when he missed the European Championships last December it was because of calf trouble rather than heart trouble.

TODAY'S NUMBER

8.67

The points amassed by English teams in the Delta Fair Play table, putting England at No 1. Associations finishing in this season's top three will be entitled to an extra place in the 1998-99 UEFA Cup. Scotland are joint 14th on 7.99.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"I'm 52 now and I don't want to be turning up at muddy training grounds for the rest of my life. Dave Bassett on his appointment as Nottingham Forest general manager.

"Everyone can see it was nowhere near a penalty. The referee was only five yards away. It was just shocking, heart-breaking. Michael, Leicester manager, on the decision that put Chelsea into the FA Cup sixth round.

"I feel a year older tonight. Russ Gold, Chelsea manager.

"Christopher Mallett is the epitome of treachery. He is a serpent - no creator of literature could have invented him. He slithers forward to his rights, hoping you will do right by him. He might as well have taken the oath on a cheeseburger. Rodney Mervin, Bruce Grobbelaar's defence barrister, during the match-fixing trial, on the chief prosecution witness.

"He told me to grow my hair long and I would get in the England side. I ask you, what sort of shit is that? Julian Dicks, of West Ham, on meeting the England assistant coach, John Gorman.

"Short of sending a couple of guys in blacked out with baseball bats, there's not a lot you can do to stop him. Jim Duffy, Tottenham manager, after defeat at Rangers, on Brian Laudrup.

"I'm glad to be back. I want for a week yesterday, and I must say I really liked the renowned redaction zone. Martina Hingis, tennis player, in her home town, Kosice, for the first time since she was three years old."

RACING RESULTS

NEWBURY
2.00: 1. SPURRING (10) (D) 9-4. 2. Clinton 4-1. 3. Strong 14-1. 4. 16 9-4. 5. 8. 6. 12. 7. 13. 8. 14. 9. 15. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000. 1001. 1002. 1003. 1004. 1005. 1006. 1007. 1008. 1009. 1010. 1011. 1012. 1013. 1014. 1015. 1016. 1017. 1018. 1019. 1020. 1021. 1022. 1023. 1024. 1025. 1026. 1027. 1028. 1029. 1030. 1031. 1032. 1033. 1034. 1035. 1036. 1037. 1038. 1039. 1040. 1041. 1042. 1043. 1044. 1045. 1046. 1047. 1048. 1049. 1050. 1051. 1052. 1053. 1054. 1055. 1056. 1057. 1058. 1059. 1060. 1061. 1062. 1063. 1064. 1065. 1066. 1067. 1068. 1069. 1070. 1071. 1072. 1073. 1074. 1075. 1076. 1077. 1078. 1079. 1080. 1081. 1082. 1083. 1084. 1085. 1086. 1087. 1088. 1089. 1090. 1091. 1092. 1093. 1094. 1095. 1096. 1097. 1098. 1099. 1100. 1101. 1102. 1103. 1104. 1105. 1106. 1107. 1108. 1109. 1110. 1111. 1112. 1113. 1114. 1115. 1116. 1117. 1118. 1119. 1120. 1121. 1122. 1123. 1124. 1125. 1126. 1127. 1128. 1129. 1130. 1131. 1132. 1133. 1134. 1135. 1136. 1137. 1138. 1139. 1140. 1141. 1142. 1143. 1144. 1145. 1146. 1147. 1148. 1149. 1150. 1151. 1152. 1153. 1154. 1155. 1156. 1157. 1158. 1159. 1160. 1161. 1162. 1163. 1164. 1165. 1166. 1167. 1168. 1169. 1170. 1171. 1172. 1173. 1174. 1175. 1176. 1177. 1178. 1179. 1180. 1181. 1182. 1183. 1184. 1185. 1186. 1187. 1188. 1189. 1190. 1191. 1192. 1193. 1194. 1195. 1196. 1197. 1198. 1199. 1200. 1201. 1202. 1203. 1204. 1205. 1206. 1207. 1208. 1209. 1210. 1211. 1212. 1213. 1214. 1215. 1216. 1217. 1218. 1219. 1220. 1221. 1222. 1223. 1224. 1225. 1226. 1227. 1228. 1229. 1230. 1231. 1232. 1233. 1234. 1235. 1236. 1237. 1238. 1239. 1240. 1241. 1242. 1243. 1244. 1245. 1246. 1247. 1248. 1249. 1250. 1251. 1252. 1253. 1254. 1255. 1256. 1257. 1258. 1259. 1260. 1261. 1262. 1263. 1264. 1265. 1266. 1267. 1268. 1269. 1270. 1271. 1272. 1273. 1274. 1275. 1276. 1277. 1278. 1279. 1280. 1281. 1282. 1283. 1284. 1285. 1286. 1287. 1288. 1289. 1290. 1291. 1292. 1293. 1294. 1295. 1296. 1297. 1298. 1299. 1300. 1301. 1302. 1303. 1304. 1305. 1306. 1307. 1308. 1309. 1310. 1311. 1312. 1313. 1314. 1315. 1316. 1317. 1318. 1319. 1320. 1321. 1322. 1323. 1324. 1325. 1326. 1327. 1328. 1329. 1330. 1331. 1332. 1333. 1334. 1335. 1336. 1337. 1338. 1339. 1340. 1341. 1342. 1343. 1344. 1345. 1346. 1347. 1348. 1349. 1350. 1351. 1352. 1353. 1354. 1355. 1356. 1357. 1358. 1359. 1360. 1361. 1362. 1363. 1364. 1365. 1366. 1367. 1368. 1369. 1370. 1371. 1372. 1373. 1374. 1375. 1376. 1377. 1378. 1379. 1380. 1381. 1382. 1383. 1384. 1385. 1386. 1387. 1388. 1389. 1390. 1391. 1392. 1393. 1394. 1395. 1396. 1397. 1398. 1399. 1400. 1401. 1402. 1403. 1404. 1405. 1406. 1407. 1408. 1409. 1410. 1411. 1412. 1413. 1414. 1415. 1416. 1417. 1418. 1419. 1420. 1421. 1422. 1423. 1424. 1425. 1426. 1427. 1428. 1429. 1430. 1431. 1432. 1433. 1434. 1435. 1436. 1437. 1438. 1439. 1440. 1441. 1442. 1443. 1444. 1445. 1446. 1447. 1448. 1449. 1450. 1451. 1452. 1453. 1454. 1455. 1456. 1457. 1458. 1459. 1460. 1461. 1462. 1463. 1464. 1465. 1466. 1467. 1468. 1469. 1470. 1471. 1472. 1473. 1474. 1475. 1476. 1477. 1478. 1479. 1480. 1481. 1482. 1483. 1484. 1485. 1486. 1487. 1488. 1489. 1490. 1491. 1492. 1493. 1494. 1495. 1496. 1497. 1498. 1499. 1500. 1501. 1502. 1503. 1504. 1505. 1506. 1507. 1508. 1509. 1510. 1511. 1512. 1513. 1514. 1515. 1516. 1517. 1518. 1519. 1520. 1521. 1522. 1523. 1524. 1525. 1526. 1527. 1528. 1529. 1530. 1531. 1532. 1533. 1534. 1535. 1536. 1537. 1538. 1539. 1540. 1541. 1542. 1543. 1544. 1545. 1546. 1547. 1548. 1549. 1550. 1551. 1552. 1553. 1554. 1555. 1556. 1557. 1558. 1559. 1560. 1561. 1562. 1563. 1564. 1565. 1566. 1567. 1568. 1569. 1570. 1571. 1572. 1573. 1574. 1575. 1576. 1577. 1578. 1579. 1580. 1581. 1582. 1583. 1584. 1585. 1586. 1587. 1588. 1589. 1590. 1591. 1592. 1593. 1594. 1595. 1596. 1597. 1598. 1599. 1600. 1601. 1602. 1603. 1604. 1605. 1606. 1607. 1608. 1609. 1610. 1611. 1612. 1613. 1614. 1615. 1616. 1617. 1618. 1619. 1620. 1621. 1622. 1623. 1624. 1625. 1626. 1627. 1628. 1629. 1630. 1631. 1632. 1633. 1634. 1635. 1636. 1637. 1638. 1639. 1640. 1641. 1642. 1643. 1644. 1645. 1646. 1647. 1648. 1649. 1650. 1651. 1652. 1653. 1654. 1655. 1656. 1657. 1658. 1659. 1660. 1661. 1662. 1663. 1664. 1665. 1666. 1667. 1668. 1669. 1670. 1671. 1672. 1673. 1674. 1675. 1676. 1677. 1678

sport

FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP

Leonard turns into Big Daddy

For England's pack leader, the All Blacks of the late Eighties are the benchmark. Chris Hewett met a genial hard man

Jason Leonard's easy-going approach to a mean and often brutal sporting profession leaves you wondering how so generous a spirit could possibly have spent the last seven years serving time with hard labour in his country's front row. England's pack leader seems too charitable by half: it is almost easier to imagine St Francis of Assisi as a member of the Corleone family.

Dig a little deeper, though, and you soon uncover the splinter of ice concealed beneath the sunny exterior. No one wins 50-odd caps as a prop forward without mastering the tricks of the trade, from the unfathomable to the unmentionable, and for all his relaxed geniality, the 28-year-old Harlequin is now the Big Daddy of the dressing room. When Jason speaks, the rest listen.

Strangely for a man who lists

shamelessly opinionated English predecessors like Jeff Probyn, Brian Moore and John Oker among his influences, Leonard is not much interested in talking a good game. Words come cheap, after all. Yet Jack Rowell, whose phenomenal success as a club coach at Bath owed an enormous amount to clever psychology as well as tactical intuition, regards his most experienced forward as something of a closet orator.

It was to Leonard that Rowell turned during the nervous build-up to the Ireland match a fortnight ago and his choice

was vindicated in the first five minutes as the England pack soaked up the early fire and fury and returned it with interest. When the team re-gathered in Marlow on Monday night to prepare for France, they were greeted once again by that chirpy London accent.

"Yes, I had a word," said Leonard before one of this week's intensive training sessions at Bisham Abbey. "What

I wanted this side to be feared and respected throughout the rugby world'

did I tell them? I told them that I wanted this side to be feared and respected throughout the rugby world. And I said that, not just because it was the sort of thing international players expect to hear in a team meeting but because I genuinely believe we have the potential to win that respect, to command that fear.

"I've been lucky enough to have played in a couple of great England sides but this one could be the best of the lot. I'm not one to brag and I have no patience with idle boasts, but I think we are capable of approaching the standards set by

the All Blacks under Wayne Shelford in the late 1980s. Their rugby was as near perfect as dammit: they had experience and youth, strength and athleticism, pure animal instinct mixed with a touch of the cavalier. It was an explosive mix and I sense a bit of it about us.

"So, the point of Monday's little chat was to make sure everyone still appreciated exactly where we were trying to get to. You can't achieve perfection, but Shelford showed how close you can get. We've played two Five Nations matches and won both by 40 points without playing well. Sooner or later, we'll really click and do someone a lot of damage. Tomorrow would be ideal as far as I'm concerned."

For all his high-flown ambition, the phrase "feet on the ground" might have been coined for Leonard. A Quin he may be, but there is nothing of the Eton and Cambridge in his background - mention the name Virgil to him and he is more likely to think of Thunderbird II than the *Aeneid* - and the England dressing-room is a better place for his brand of earthy realism. In an age of professional craftsmanship, the silver spoon counts for less than nothing.

Rather like Jeremy Guscott, a fellow comprehensive school

type, Leonard climbed through the ranks on the back of his own raw talent to establish himself as a major player on the world stage. Today, he goes to toe with Christian Calmano, the

soldier from Toulouse, and there are many aficionados of the front row jungle who have the two men level pegging at the very top of the tree. "Good boy, Calmano," he says with one of his soft, reflective smiles. "I'm looking forward to seeing him again."

That carefree line speaks

volumes for Leonard's seemingly inexhaustible enthusiasm for life amid the bump and grind. The youngest Englishman to reach a half century of appearances, he has missed only

one match - the 1995 World Cup pool game with Western Samoa, when Rowell fielded a shadow side - since making his debut in Buenos Aires in 1990. When you consider that he suffered a ruptured disc in his neck in 1992 - the worst imaginable injury for a prop - his durability appears more impressive still.

"One of the great joys of being involved at the top level is

the fact that you take something with you from every game. No matter how much you think you know, how many times you've been in the situation before, you never go through an international without learning some sort of lesson.

"When I captained England against Argentina in Phil de Glanville's absence just before Christmas, I learned one of the most valuable lessons of all - namely, never to assume anything about your opposition. We'd looked at the Pumas on video and at no point did we see the ball move beyond the outside-half, so we went into the

game expecting more of the same. Of course, they caught us on the hop by playing with width as well as passion and as a result, things began to go wrong.

"But what people tend to forget about that game is the result on the old scoreboard at the end. When it came down to brass tacks, we had enough discipline and enough belief to squeeze out a win. As a performance, it was fairly disappointing; as a victory, it was crucial to our confidence."

Leonard believes the feel-good factor amongst the forwards, in particular, will benefit from Rowell's commitment to continuity. "The really strong English packs of recent vintage built up their togetherness over a period of 20 or 30 internationals and I want to see this unit, which I believe possesses world-class potential, given a similar opportunity," he said.

That sort of timescale would give the boy from Barking close on 90 caps. What price the century?

The youngest Englishman to reach 50 caps, Jason Leonard knows that nothing can be taken for granted against France today

Photograph: Peter Jay

A nation places its faith in Benazzi

At a time when the French nation is struggling to come to terms with Le Pen xenophobia and the recent passing of another town - Vitrolles on the Côte d'Azur - into the hands of the National Front, the presence of a Moroccan as captain of France is heavy with symbolism. Especially among the rugby community which has always cherished its image of a slightly marginal group of freethinkers.

Abdelatif Benazzi, son of Zineb and Mohamed, is not only an Arab, but a practising Muslim, and proud of it. Born and raised in Oujda, near Morocco's border with Algeria, he was the unanimous choice to replace Philippe Saint-André as captain last year when the Tricolores' left-winger was forced to pull out of a Test series

against South Africa with a groin injury.

"Being captain of France, even if it is just an interim, is an enormous thing for me, and I feel very honoured to have been given the role," he says. "It is far more than just a personal victory, but it has not really changed me. In Oujda I am not particularly famous, and my family, as ever, welcomed the news with modesty and simplicity."

As for his Muslim beliefs, they are as discreet as they are unbending. "I have a faith, and it happens to be Islam. But Islam also teaches one to respect others, respect their difference," he says. Religion is central to his life and his success as a sportsman. "It gives me immense strength. Strength to work, to play rugby and to keep

A captain's talent and strength of character have lifted him above prejudice. Ian Borthwick reports

things in perspective. It is my driving force and, as such, very important to me."

Gifted with immense inner strength and determination, Benazzi, despite a relatively late start in the game, has risen to become one of the world's finest forwards, devastating in defence and with the ball in hand. He is one of the few players to have worn all the numbers from 4 to 8 in international rugby, and even today his true role remains undefined within the French XV. Second row, flanker, or No 8 he is as unclassifiable as he is indispensable to the French, and there is still a possibility that he will play half of today's game in the back row and half in the second row alongside Olivier Merle.

Benazzi first encountered rugby at the Lycée El Oushda in Oujda, where his PT teacher, Majid Vert, a former second-rower for Morocco, convinced the powerfully built teenager to give up track and field, forget the

discus, the shot and decathlon, and take up rugby. Within a year he was playing for the Moroccan Junior XV and the chain of events which led to his arrival in France reads like something out of an Arab equivalent of the *Boys' Own Annual*.

In 1987, Benazzi, now a full international, was on tour with Morocco in Czechoslovakia where his path crossed that of a touring Third Division French side, Luzern. The power, energy and raw natural talent of the 19-year-old was immediately noticed by club officials who rapidly invited him to come and play in France, and in a matter of months he was playing for the nearby Second Division club, Cahors. His impact was immediate, and after one season at Cahors he transferred to Agen, one of the 17 First Division clubs which attempted to lure him away in the off-season.

Overcoming the racism and distrust which first greeted his ar-

rival in this traditional bastion of French rugby became one of Benazzi's first major victories and now, six years later and with 51 international caps to his credit, he has not only risen to the rank of captain of Agen, but also to that of a genuine local hero.

He has nevertheless remained close to his Arab roots: despite the gargantuan after-match festivities associated with rugby in south-west France he never drinks alcohol, remains a devout Muslim, and even attempted in the early years strictly to observe Ramadan despite the fact that it inevitably falls in the most rigorous part of the rugby season. "I now know that it is impossible to respect Ramadan and play top-level sport at the same time. So I cheat a little, and for all those days where I cheat I make them up later in the year, observing the fast from dawn to dusk."

His captaincy of the French team remains as discreet and understated as the rest of his personality. Benazzi never raises his voice, but despite the inevitable trace of the North African accent, so often ridiculed in France, his size, aura and burning black eyes are suf-

ficient to ensure respect. As for today's match against England, Benazzi places it a cut above the other games of the championship. "One of the things I will be saying to the younger players who have never played in England, is that a game at Twickenham is something you will remember all your life. We know the English will start as favourites, but in that sense we have nothing to lose. I will simply ask the players to give it all they have got, to try everything so that at least we don't come off the field feeling frustrated."

He is conscious, however, of the scrappy nature of France's two early games, and of the disturbing number of handling errors which has prevented them from getting their game going. "In a match like this anything can happen," he insists. "We tried a lot of things against Wales, but we also made a lot of mistakes. Our support play was poor, and at times we were just trying too hard, being too hasty to allow things to fall in place. We will be looking to eliminate all those small imperfections from our game. But, above all, we are determined not to sit back and just watch England play."



Benazzi: "Twickenham is something you remember all your life"

The French. And another poultry performance.

(England to win by a 16pt margin: 8/1.)

ENGLAND v FRANCE			
Twickenham, kick off 3.30 pm, live on BBC			
Forecast the score with France receiving an 8 point start.			
First Tryscorer			
8/1 J. Sleighthorne	5/1 England win by 1-5 points		
9/1 D. Vennart	4/1 England win by 6-10 points		
10/1 T. Underwood	5/1 England win by 11-15 points		
11/1 A. Gomersall	8/1 England win by 16-20 points		
12/1 L. Lattin	12/1 England win by 21-25 points		
14/1 W. Carrling	11/2 France win by 1-5 points		
14/1 P. De Glanville	8/1 France win by 6-10 points		
14/1 A. Bazard	10/1 France win by 11-15 points		
15/1 J. L. Sadoumy	40/1 France win by 16-20 points		
22/1 P. Grayson	80/1 France win by 21-25 points		

SCOTLAND v IRELAND			
Murrayfield, kick off 3.30 pm, live on BBC			
Forecast the score with Ireland receiving a 4 point start.			
First Tryscorer			
8/1 J. Langan	4/1 Scotland win by 1-5 points		
9/1 J. Bell	5/1 Scotland win by 6-10 points		
12/1 D. Hickey	8/2 Ireland win by 1-5 points		
14/1 K. McQuinn	7/1 Ireland win by 6-10 points		

These prices may have changed since this newspaper was printed. For the very latest prices, page 14 of the Independent (Sat).

FOR INSTANT BETTING FROM A MOBILE PHONE
0800 524 524
*min total £10 stated. Calls must be 18 or over. Ladbrokes telephone betting and teletext apply. Prices subject to fluctuation. © Ladbrokes Group

Ladbrokes
For a bet, Ladbrokes are favourite.

Irish foil amazing Scottish recovery

Scotland produced an incredible comeback in the A international at Myreside yesterday but still came out second best, eventually losing out 34-33 to their Irish counterparts.

Down 20-7 at half-time Scotland twice took the lead but in an amazing finish, with the Scots leading 33-27 with just two minutes of normal time remaining, a pass by their stand-off, Ally Donaldson, was intercepted by Ireland's winger Niall Woods, who raced over for the try.

Michael Lynch's conversion gave Ireland their one-point win, and meant misery for Scotland who looked the better side for most of the game. They were made to pay after their weakness in the tackle gave away soft tries by Ireland's full-back Ciaran Clarke and Woods' first.

For Scotland, their centre Cameron Murray celebrated his first game with two tries and there were two touchdowns for his fellow centre, Ron Erliksson, dropped from the national side.

despite scoring against England at Twickenham a month ago.

Scotland's other try came from John Kerr with Donaldson converting four of their tries but the Currie stand-off missed a long-range penalty that could have won the game.

The earlier Under-21 international between the countries was a much more clear-cut affair with Ireland winning 31-0.

The Scots were outplayed up front by an Ireland pack that struggled powerfully, worked well in the line-out and in open play showed exemplary handling skills.

Ireland's backs were also a cut above their Scottish counterparts, their swift handling, quick running and ease on the ball.

Ireland led 11-0 at half-time thanks to two penalties by Ronan O'Gara and a try by Gavin Dempsey and against the first breeze in the second half they adapted well by using their strong forwards in close formation to gain territorial advantage.

Sheldon Coulter scored three minutes into the second half and Scotland's misery was compounded when Ireland scored two pushover tries, the first attributed to O'Gara and the second to their scrum-half Stephen Bell.

Right on full-time Emmet Farrell, on as a substitute, em-

Return of the prodigal may not stop Scots' slide into ignominy

SIMON TURNBULL

Alan Tait's last appearance for Scotland happens to date back to the day which ended with Dean Richards and John Jeffrey being held accountable for the Calcutta Cup being used as the football on Princes Street. Nine years later, the prodigal Tait returns after his rugby league exile with Scotland's battered pride in need of urgent repair.

Last season, and the season before, Scotland went into their final Five Nations fixture with Grand Slam glory within their grasp. Defeat against Ireland at Murrayfield today would leave Rob Wainwright and his colleagues with one hand on the wooden spoon and, given the Paris match awaiting them in a fortnight, the prospect of sliding ignominiously into the history books as the first whitewashed Scotland team since 1985.

It was the same season, in fact, that the Irish celebrated their most recent success at Murrayfield, an 18-15 victory which featured two Trevor Ringland tries. If that proves to be an unhappy coincidence for the Scots, their selectors, Jeffrey among them, could be excused for not knowing where to turn next - except, perhaps, for examining the kind of fruitful family trees which have produced three of the 21 players on duty for Ireland today.

Scotland's fitful form since Arwel Thomas's fitful touchline conversion left them three-quarters of the way to a Grand Slam twelve months ago has simply underscored the bottom line that Richie Dixon, the national team coach, has a dearth of world-class talent at his disposal. That stark reality was exposed by Australia and Italy before Christmas and exploited by Wales, with their three-try scoring burst in five second-half minutes at Murrayfield in January, and by England at Twickenham four weeks ago.

At least Tait's return to the union fold, with Newcastle, has afforded the Scottish selectors an-

other midfield option. Jeffrey's one-time Kello comrade suggested with his influential performance in Scotland's 36-11 submergence of an "Emerging Wales" in January that he will have much to offer in his centre pairing with Gregor Townsend, even as a 33-year-old who made his original international debut as a replacement for John Rutherford in the World Cup match against France in Christchurch ten years ago.

Much has been made this week of Tait's second coming. Much too much, in fact. As the captain, Wainwright, put it yesterday: "Some people seem to be expecting miracles from

Alan, but he has been out of rugby union for longer than his Welsh counterparts."

Wainwright, who moves to his favoured blind-side position in Scotland's back row this afternoon, might have added that more than one converted Welshman breathed new life into the old dragon at Murrayfield six weeks ago. The great Scots, Quinell and Gibbs, and Alan Bateman, were also in the Welsh team which subsequently laid its tail out between its legs by the Irish. Fortunately for Scotland, the false dawn syndrome was transmitted to the victors in Cardiff that day.

Brian Ashton arrived in Edinburgh on Thursday with his six-year contract but with a team to Zatters. Considering that Eric Miller, Eric Elwood and Nick Poppell have, since the Arms Park game, been added to a casualty list which already included Simon Geoghegan and Keith Wood, the former Bath coach could be said to have swapped the Red for the White. The wound of most immediate concern to Ashton, though, is the one that was inflicted by the 17 men who played for the land of his fathers at Lansdowne Road a fortnight ago. The damage done by the five tries conceded in that final 16-minute slaughter could have painful implications if Scotland make an early breakthrough this afternoon.

SCOTLAND v IRELAND			
Murrayfield, kick off 3.30 pm, live on BBC			
Forecast the score with Ireland receiving a 4 point start.			
First Tryscorer			
8/1 J. Langan	4/1 Scotland win by 1-5 points		
9/1 J. Bell	5/1 Scotland win by 6-10 points		
12/1 D. Hickey	8/2 Ireland win by 1-5 points		
14/1 K. McQuinn	7/1 Ireland win by 6-10 points		

هكذا من الأصل

**Cop
retu
cor**

Parkes unworried by uncertain future

Photograph: Andrew Cowie/Colorsport

TEAM SHEET

...with a knee injury.

Burns rallies his troops

Figure 6

هكذا من الأصل

Newcastle went barking mad, but the referee allowed the goal; there is nothing in the FA rulebook about the intervention of dogs

As Leicester discovered on Wednesday night, anybody can make a mistake — although that is little consolation when you are three minutes from a penalty shoot-out and the possibility of qualifying for the FA Cup quarter-finals, and that "anybody" is the match referee.

And what is so frustrating is that the referee, like the customer, is always right — even when he is wrong. I mean, how often have you heard a referee admitting he's cocked up? Exactly. It is as rare as an East End win to hear an official admit, as Ian Burrell once did to the former Crystal Palace manager, Alan Smith: "I'm having a crap game and nothing you say will change it."

Even more worryingly, referees often reveal totally different priorities to the rest of us, as David Elleray proved last year when he said: "I do like Selhurst Park. There's a Sainsbury next to the ground where

I can do the weekend shopping."

So while Mike Reed's mistake in awarding a penalty against Leicester for a foul that television revealed as a dive has inevitably raised the clamour for the introduction of video evidence, his is simply the latest in a long line of referees' balls-up that are as much a talking point of a game as a sloping pitch.

Who could ever forget the appalling decisions that resulted in Maradona's infamous "hand of God" goal, Ronald Koeman getting off scot-free, and England's hopes of qualifying for USA '94 (and Graham Taylor's England career) being dashed by Harold Schnoor's unpunished assault on Patrick Battison at the 1982 World Cup in Spain; and the Romanian goal that never was in Euro '96?

But far more bizarre — if admittedly less significant — was the goal

scored by a dog against Newcastle Town in the Staffordshire Sunday Cup in November 1985. Stoke side Knave of Clubs were 2-0 down when one of their players hopelessly missed his shot from 15 yards out — whereupon a dog ran on to the field and showed Duncan Ferguson-like prowess in rising to head the ball into the net. Newcastle justifiably went barking mad, but the referee allowed the goal; apparently there is nothing in the FA rulebook about the intervention of dogs.

There are rules, however, about the intervention by referee or linesman. So when the referee inadvertently deflected the ball into the net during a crucial 1986 match between Barrow and Plymouth Argyle, the goal stood, sending Barrow to the top of the Third Division (although the goal was later credited to a Barrow striker to save the referee's embarrassment).

Olivia Blair



ON SATURDAY

But nothing could save the embarrassment of David Allison who, in 1985, booked Southampton's Danny Wallace for a foul that was actually committed by Jimmy Case, and then compounded his crime by sending Wallace off for a second bookable offence. Allison should never have made the mistake in the first

place considering Case was 5ft 9in, 12st and white while Wallace was 5ft 4in, nine-and-a-half stone and black.

The Danish referee Henning Eriksen was not even looking when he disallowed a goal in a game between Noerager and Ebeltøft in 1960. Noerager were 4-3 up when Eriksen's false teeth fell out as he prepared to blow the final whistle. As he bent down to pick them up, Ebeltøft equalised. Eriksen disallowed the goal; he argued that while he had not actually blown, the 90 minutes were up and he "had to get my teeth back before some player put his big foot on them".

Then there was the referee who booked a mute player for foul and abusive language... and a certain Mr Kirkham, who, having arrived 45 minutes late to referee a game between Derby and Sunderland in 1894, took the law into his own hands and ordered it to be restarted.

Derby, who had been 3-0 up at the time, scored three more goals only for Sunderland to hit five in what was literally a game of three halves.

Mr WP Harper was doggedly unrepentant when the official allowed a Newcastle goal to stand against Arsenal in the 1932 FA Cup final, even though the ball had clearly gone out of play en route to goal. "It was a goal," as God is my judge, "I was eight yards away," he claimed. Stills from *British Movietone News* show that the ball was definitely out and that Harper was 20 yards away. It was scant consolation to Arsenal: the record shows they missed out on the Double that year.

Belgium, meanwhile, missed out on progressing to the next stage of USA '94 thanks to the Swiss referee Kurt Rottliher, who failed to award either a penalty or send off the German defender Thomas Helmer for

bringing down Josip Weter in the 76th minute of their group match, with Germany leading 3-2. Rottliher admitted his mistake on the back of video evidence and was discarded by Fifa since he was "nearing retirement age anyway" — which must have made the Belgians wonder what he was doing there in the first place.

So Mike Reed is by no means the only guilty party. But just a word of warning to those who favour video evidence as a means of judging such decisions. After the Corinthian player Edmundson was sent off for striking a Santos defender during Brazil's 1995-96 season, bungling club officials brought the wrong tape to the subsequent hearing, forcing the disciplinary committee to sit through 50 minutes of *The Adventures of Scooby Doo*.

Which just goes to show that referees are not the only ones who can make a dog's dinner of things.

Coppell's return to combat

Football
NICHOLAS HARLING

Steve Coppell, who looked and sounded a broken man when he walked out of Manchester City nearly four months ago, re-entered the fray of football management yesterday with Crystal Palace for the second time.

The pressure that Coppell had said was the reason he had left the Maine Road hot seat after just 33 days seemed to be far from his mind, judging by his relaxed countenance at Selhurst Park when he was named as Dave Bassett's successor at Palace for the second time in 13 years. He has taken the job in a caretaker capacity until the end of the season. Ray Lewington will stay as first team coach and will pick the side for today's game at Oxford United.

While expectations may be slightly lower at Palace than at Manchester City, Coppell did not give that as the reason why he was prepared to return to management. In announcing his departure from Maine Road in November "on medical grounds", Coppell had said: "I have suffered for some time from the huge pressure I have imposed on myself. Since my appointment this has completely overwhelmed me to such an extent that I can't function in the job in the way I would like to."

Yesterday Coppell refused to talk about his time at City, saying only: "It's over, done with, finished. I was in a footballing wilderness after that, but now I've got the opportunity to get my teeth into something."

The comments of Ron Noades, the Palace chairman, provided further confusion. Although it was Coppell himself who had announced to the world that he was leaving City because of "the huge pressure", Noades insisted: "The situation at Maine Road was all paper talk. Steve never got the chance to defend himself against the allegations of pressure and Manchester City massaged the situation to satisfy their supporters. I don't think

his departure was down to ill-health, I think that is just something Manchester City put out."

Francis Lee, the City chairman, was clearly taken aback by yesterday's news. "I have to say that I am surprised, but we at Manchester City wish him all the best," he said.

Back at Selhurst Park, Coppell said: "I know the players here, the supporters and the personnel. I feel comfortable here."

Coppell had already been doing some scouting work for Palace in recent weeks and this is his third appointment by the club. Noades employed him for the first time in 1984 following Bassett's about-turn three days after leaving Wimbledon. Having resigned following Palace's relegation from the Premiership in 1993, Coppell returned as technical director two years later before leaving for Manchester City last October.

When Bassett's latest reign ended on Thursday with his decision to join Nottingham Forest as general manager, Noades decided "after a few jars with Ray Lewington" that Coppell was the man to keep them on the First Division promotion trail.

"The first six years of his previous stay were the most successful period in the club's history," Noades explained. During that time Palace won promotion in 1989, came within seven minutes of winning the FA Cup the following season and then finished third in the old First Division another year later.

"From the team's point of view it means a fresh person coming in with least disruption," Coppell said. "Dave has done a great job in setting the club up and we're in a position of great potential with 14 games to go. I'm looking forward to those remaining games and I will do my very best to get the club into the Premier League."

He has no immediate plans for delving into the transfer market before the deadline. "There are exciting players here with great potential," he explained. "It's a young squad with stability, good balance and good strengths."



Ron Noades, the Palace chairman, welcomes his new manager Steve Coppell (left) yesterday. Photograph: Rebecca Naden/PA

Guppy back with O'Neill at Leicester

Port Vale's talented winger, Steve Guppy, yesterday signed for Leicester City in a £850,000 move, writes Alan Nodas. The deal could rise to £1m depending upon appearances.

The 27-year-old joined Port Vale from Newcastle United in November 1994 for £225,000 and began his League career playing for the Leicester City manager, Martin O'Neill, at Wycombe.

Mike Reed, the referee at the centre of the penalty controversy which ended Leicester's FA Cup hopes, has revealed he was confronted by furious fans after the 1-0 defeat by Chelsea.

Reed, 45, was trapped in his car after the match at Stamford Bridge, which was decided by Reed's extra-time penalty award. He said fans abused him and threatened his car at traffic lights near the ground.

The former Aston Villa striker Dalian Atkinson has been training with Manchester City but might have to return to his Turkish club, Fenerbahce.

Goalkeepers will find their job specifications altered if certain rule changes are approved in Belfast by the International Board today. The most likely changes are allowing the keeper to move on his line for penalties, and extending the pass-back rule to include throw-ins.

Newcastle Station, page 23

Pearce on the prowl

Stuart Pearce should be a happy man today. Nottingham Forest's caretaker player-manager has made it clear that he does not welcome the media attention which his new role has brought, but the cameras at this afternoon's Premiership match against Tottenham Hotspur are likely to be directed elsewhere.

After a week of dramatic change at Forest, much of the attention at White Hart Lane will be focused on Dave Bassett, the club's new general manager, and Irving Scholar, who is one of the key figures behind the consortium which won control of Forest this week.

Bassett and Pearce may be the Londoners returning to the capital, but nobody in the Forest camp will feel more at home today than Scholar, who was Tottenham's chairman until he was replaced by Alan Sugar six years ago. Scholar, a Tottenham fan since his school days, once said that he loved the club "as much as anyone in my own family".

Scholar agrees that "it will be very strange" to be supporting the visitors today and added: "The last match I was involved in was the 1991 Cup final, when Tottenham beat Nottingham Forest, and that my first match back will be at Tottenham. I have to admit, a little bit spooky."

For the time being, however, Pearce is still in one of the relegation positions, while Tottenham have won only one of their last seven matches. "We must start picking up points again or we'll be looking over our shoulders," Gerry Francis, the Tottenham manager, said.

Tottenham's cause was not helped by the news that Teddy Sheringham aggravated his ankle injury when making a scoring return at West Ham on Monday, and is definitely out of today's game. Having lost only once at Tottenham in the past six years, Forest will see today as a chance to pull clear of the two teams below them, Middlesbrough and Southampton, who face difficult away matches against Sheffield Wednesday and Newcastle United respectively.

The two teams above Forest also travel. West Ham go to Leeds and Gordon Strachan taking Coventry to visit Manchester United, one of his former clubs. Victory will put United, the Premiership leaders, four points clear of second-placed Liverpool, who travel tomorrow to Aston Villa. Newcastle, meanwhile, can move to within two points of Liverpool if they overcome the loss of the injured Alan Shearer and beat

Comeback on course for Olazabal

Golf
ANDY FARRELL
reports from Dubai

Ever since the Ryder Cup qualifying process started in September, it has been difficult to evaluate the largely academic question of whether Seve Ballesteros or Jose Maria Olazabal was more likely to make the European team this year. Two days into Olazabal's comeback after 18 months' absence due to a foot injury and it is fairly clear. Despite a triple-bogey eight at the 18th (it was that sort of day — there were six eights and two nines), Olazabal shot a 74 in the second round of the Dubai Desert Classic to be one under par. Ballesteros shot an 84 to be 15 shots worse. Olly will not.

Being in the middle of the desert, the Emirates course is somewhat exposed when a strong wind blows and anything under par yesterday was a fine effort.

Olazabal, in his first tournament since September '95, would have achieved that with a par at the 10th. Having started at the 10th, he was five under when he pulled his drive at the par-five and took two more to get back to the fairway.

Then he faced a 130-yard shot over the water to the green but did not make it. "I tried a punchy seven-iron but it flew above the tents and the wind took it," Olazabal said.

"Apart from that hole, it was a good round. I will ask the sponsors to let me play 17 holes tomorrow because it felt like 19 today, but I am just happy to be playing on the weekend."

That success is in contrast to his countryman, who has failed to make the cut for the third time in three attempts this year. Seve's eventful round contained one birdie, nine bogeys and two double-bogeys. "It's got to be killing him," Greg Norman said. The world No 1 once faced himself in the mirror when the victories dried up in the early 1990s, but says what the Spaniard is suffering is worse.

"I would be thinking about walking away if I was shooting 84s," Norman said. "You bleed for Seve and for Ian Baker-Finch. Seve is an inspiration to be around. He still has that aura, even for me. Certain individuals have it, like Nelson Mandela, George Bush and Bill Clinton."

Norman showed his class yesterday with birdies at the two hardest holes on the course, the 434-yard 11th and the 463-yard 19th, both playing against the wind. The Australian's 68 was only one outside Ian Woosnam's best round of the day that took the Welshman into joint second with the broomhandle-wielding Bernhard Langer.

They were both two shots behind Spain's Domingo Hospital. While his co-leader overnight, Colin Montgomerie, played better but stayed at seven under, Hospital played worse and got to 10 under with a 69. An occasional commercial pilot, the secret to Hospital's success has been to leave the driver given to him by Ballesteros at home, and put the putter given to him by Olazabal in his bag. The result has been 28 and 27 puts on the first two days and the chance to fly into uncharted airspace over the weekend.

Easy Oars soars

Sailing

Tony Buckingham's 40ft Easy Oars led the celebrations for the British trio of 1997 Admiral's Cup boats as they put in another set of solid performances at the SORC regatta in Miami, writes Stuart Alexander.

Despite gear failure in the third race of a five-day series, the Olympic helmsman Andy Beadsworth took Easy Oars, the former American team yacht Pigs in Space, to a close-fought third race and then led from start to finish in the fourth. Also enjoying the breezy, 18

to 22-knot winds was the crew of Tim Barrett's Mumm 30, Bradamonte. With the 1996 Olympic silver medalists, John Merricks and Ian Walker, steering and calling tactics, aided by 1992 the 470 Olympian Andy Hemmings trimming sails, they showed good downwind speed to take two second places.

Completing the picture, Graham Walker's 45ft Indulgence made up for a fifth place in the third race, when caught by a shift in wind direction, with a well-earned third in the fourth. The 14 yachts in the BT Challenge began the fourth leg from Sydney to Cape Town tomorrow.

Coppell in line to replace Bassett

How the Independent broke the news yesterday

Jets hunt for first trophy

Basketball

Mike Burton, the Chester Jets coach, hopes his players will take at least a four-point lead into the final minute of tomorrow's 7-Up League Trophy final, when they bid for the first title in the club's history against the London Towers.

The Jets have lost the last two out of three Bowdler League meetings against the Towers this season, but only after London hit a three-pointer

for the final basket of the game. Burton, who was once assistant with the England team under the London coach, Kevin Cadle, said: "We'll just play them hard like we've done in the past and let the game take care of itself."

Cadle expects neutrals in the crowd to back Chester, but believes his team's away games in the European Cup have prepared them. "Every European game was like a cup final, so we've been in this situation already this season," he said.

Rusedski still out injured

Tennis

Greg Rusedski is still suffering with a wrist injury and has pulled out of the ATP Tour event in Rotterdam next week.

Rusedski, the British No 2, was injured playing Pete Sampras in the final of the San Jose tournament two weeks ago. He

had to pull out of Memphis, which followed San Jose, but came back in the Philadelphia tournament this week, losing 6-4, 6-2 to Thomas Johansson of Sweden in the first round.

Now back in London, Rusedski is still in pain and feels it is futile to play in Rotterdam and risk aggravating the injury.

Basketball

NBA: Cleveland 73 Chicago 70; LA Lakers 122 Minnesota 107; Milwaukee 107 Dallas 106; Orlando 106 Houston 105; Utah 119 Toronto 114.

Bowls

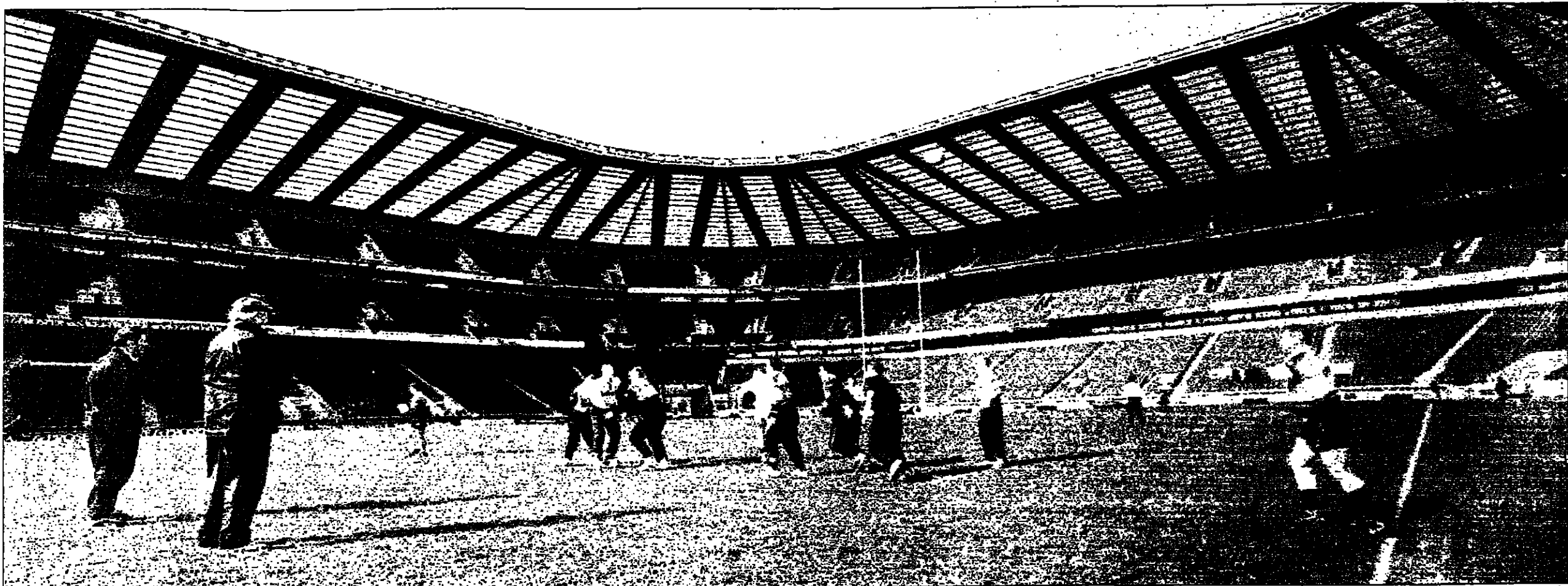
WOMEN'S ALL-ENGLAND INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS (World Bowls Championships, first round: 1st Round (1st/2nd) 1st Round (3rd/4th) 1st Round (5th/6th) 1st Round (7th/8th) 1st Round (9th/10th) 1st Round (11th/12th) 1st Round (13th/14th) 1st Round (15th/16th) 1st Round (17th/18th) 1st Round (19th/20th) 1st Round (21st/22nd) 1st Round (23rd/24th) 1st Round (25th/26th) 1st Round (27th/28th) 1st Round (29th/30th) 1st Round (31st/32nd) 1st Round (33rd/34th) 1st Round (35th/36th) 1st Round (37th/38th) 1st Round (39th/40th) 1st Round (41st/42nd) 1st Round (43rd/44th) 1st Round (45th/46th) 1st Round (47th/48th) 1st Round (49th/50th) 1st Round (51st/52nd) 1st Round (53rd/54th) 1st Round (55th/56th) 1st Round (57th/58th) 1st Round (59th/60th) 1st Round (61st/62nd) 1st Round (63rd/64th) 1st Round (65th/66th) 1st Round (67th/68th) 1st Round (69th/70th) 1st Round (71st/72th) 1st Round (73rd/74th) 1st Round (75th/76th) 1st Round (77th/78th) 1st Round (79th/80th) 1st Round (81st/82nd) 1st Round (83rd/84th) 1st Round (85th/86th) 1st Round (87th/88th) 1st Round (89th/90th) 1st Round (91st/92nd) 1st Round (93rd/94th) 1st Round (95th/96th) 1st Round (97th/98th) 1st Round (99th/100th) 1st Round (101st/102nd) 1st Round (103rd/104th) 1st Round (105th/106th) 1st Round (107th/108th) 1st Round (109th/110th) 1st Round (111th/112th) 1st Round (113th/114th) 1st Round (115th/116th) 1st Round (117th/118th) 1st Round (119th/120th) 1st Round (121st/122nd) 1st Round (123rd/124th) 1st Round (125th/126th) 1st Round (127th/128th) 1st Round (129th/130th) 1st Round (131st/132th) 1st Round (133rd/134th) 1st Round (135th/136th) 1st Round (137th/138th) 1st Round (139th/140th) 1st Round (141st/142th) 1st Round (143rd/144th) 1st Round (145th/146th) 1st Round (147th/148th) 1st Round (149th/150th) 1st Round (151st/152nd) 1st Round (153rd/154th) 1st Round (155th/156th) 1st Round (157th/158th) 1st Round (159th/160th) 1st Round (161st/162th) 1st Round (163rd/164th) 1st Round (165th/166th) 1st Round (167th/168th) 1st Round (169th/170th) 1st Round (171st/172th) 1st Round (173rd/174th) 1st Round (175th/176th) 1st Round (177th/178th) 1st Round (179th/180th) 1st Round (181st/182nd) 1st Round (183rd/184th) 1st Round (185th/186th) 1st Round (187th/188th) 1st Round (189th/190th) 1st Round (191st/192th) 1st Round (193rd/194th) 1st Round (195th/196th) 1st Round (197th/198th) 1st Round (199th/200th) 1st Round (201st/202nd) 1st Round (203rd/204th) 1st Round (205th/206th) 1st Round (207th/208th) 1st Round (209th/210th) 1st Round (211st/212th) 1st Round (213th/214th) 1st Round (215th/216th) 1st Round (217th/218th) 1st Round (219th/220th) 1st Round (221st/222nd) 1st Round (223rd/224th) 1st Round (225th/226th) 1st Round (227th/228th) 1st Round (229th/230th) 1st Round (231st/232th) 1st Round (233rd/234th) 1st Round (235th/236th) 1st Round (237th/238th) 1st Round (239th/240th) 1st Round (241st/242th) 1st Round (243rd/244th) 1st Round (245th/246th) 1st Round (247th/248th) 1st Round (249th/250th) 1st Round (251st/252nd) 1st Round (253rd/254th) 1st Round (255th/256th) 1st Round (257th/258th) 1st Round (259th/260th) 1st Round (261st/262th) 1st Round (263rd/264th) 1st Round (265th/266th) 1st Round (267th/268th) 1st Round (269th/270th) 1st Round (271st/272th) 1st Round (273rd/274th) 1st Round (275th/276th) 1st Round (277th/278th) 1st Round (279th/280th) 1st Round (281st/282nd) 1st Round (283rd/284th) 1st Round (285th/286th) 1st Round (287th/288th) 1st Round (289th/290th) 1st Round (291st/292th) 1st Round (293rd/294th) 1st Round (295th/296th) 1st Round (297th/298th) 1st Round (299th/300th) 1st Round (301st/302nd) 1st Round (303rd/304th) 1st Round (305th/306th) 1st Round (307th/308th) 1st Round (309th/310th) 1st Round (311st/312th) 1st Round (313th/314th) 1st Round (315th/316th) 1st Round (317th/318th) 1st Round (319th/320th) 1st Round (321st/322nd) 1st Round (323rd/324th) 1st Round (325th/326th) 1st Round (327th/328th) 1st Round (329th/330th) 1st Round (331st/332th) 1st Round (333rd/334th) 1st Round (335th/336th) 1st Round (337th/338th) 1st Round (339th/340th) 1st Round (341st/342th) 1st Round (343rd/344th) 1st Round (345th/346th) 1st Round (347th/348th) 1st Round (349th/350th) 1st Round (351st/352nd) 1st Round (353rd/354th) 1st Round (355th/356th) 1st Round (357th/358th) 1st Round (359th/360th) 1st Round (361st/362th) 1st Round (363rd/364th) 1st Round (365th/366th) 1st Round (367th/368th) 1st Round (369th/370th) 1st Round (371st/372th) 1st Round (373rd/374th) 1st Round (375th/376th) 1st Round (377th/378th) 1st Round (379th/380th) 1st Round (381st/382nd) 1st Round (383rd/384th) 1st Round (385th/386th) 1st Round (387th/388th) 1st Round (389th/390th) 1st Round (391st/392th) 1st Round (393rd/394th) 1st Round (395th/396th) 1st Round (397th/398th) 1st Round (399th/400th) 1st Round (401st/402nd) 1st Round (403rd/404th) 1st Round (405th/406th) 1st Round (407th/408th) 1st Round (409th/410th) 1st Round (411st/412th) 1st Round (413th/414th) 1st Round (415th/416th) 1st Round (417th/418th) 1st Round (419th/420th) 1st Round (421st/422nd) 1st Round (423rd/424th) 1st Round (425th/426th) 1st Round (427th/428th) 1st Round (429th/430th) 1st Round (431st/432th) 1st Round (433rd/434th) 1st Round (435th/436th) 1st Round (437th/438th) 1st Round (439th/440th) 1st Round (441st/442th) 1st Round (443rd/444th) 1st Round (445th/446th) 1st Round (447th/448th) 1st Round (449th/450th) 1st Round (451st/452nd) 1st Round (453rd/454th) 1st Round (455th/456th) 1st Round (457th/458th) 1st Round (459th/460th) 1st Round (461st/462th) 1st Round (463rd/464th) 1st Round (465th/466th) 1st Round (467th/468th) 1st Round (469th/470th) 1st Round (471st/472th) 1st Round (473rd/474th) 1st Round (475th/476th) 1st Round (477th/478th) 1st Round (479th/480th) 1st Round (481st/482nd) 1st Round (483rd/484th) 1st Round (485th/486th) 1st Round (487th/488th) 1st Round (489th/490th) 1st Round (491st/492th) 1st Round (493rd/494th) 1st Round (495th/496th) 1st Round (497th/498th) 1st Round (499th/500th) 1st Round (501st/502nd) 1st Round (503rd/504th) 1st Round (505th/506th) 1st Round (507th/508th) 1st Round (509th/510th) 1st Round (511st/512th) 1st Round (513th/514th) 1st Round (515th/516th) 1st Round (517th/518th) 1st Round (519th/520th) 1st Round (521st/522nd) 1st Round (523rd/524th) 1st Round (525th/526th) 1st Round (527th/528th) 1st Round (529th/530th) 1st Round (531st/532th) 1st Round (533rd/534th) 1st Round (535th/536th) 1st Round (537th/538th) 1st Round (539th/540th) 1st Round (541st/542th) 1st Round (543rd/544th) 1st Round (545th/546th) 1st Round (547th/548th) 1st Round (549th/550th) 1st Round (551st/552nd) 1st Round (553rd/554th) 1st Round (555th/556th) 1st Round (557th/558th) 1st Round (559th/560th) 1st Round (561st/562th) 1st Round (563rd/564th) 1st Round (565th/566th) 1st Round (567th/568th) 1st Round (569th/570th) 1st Round (571st/572th) 1st Round (573rd/574th) 1st Round (575th/576th) 1st Round (577th/578th) 1st Round (579th/580th) 1st Round (581st/582nd) 1st Round (583rd/584th) 1st Round (585th/586th) 1st Round (587th/588th) 1st Round (589th/590th) 1st Round (591st/592th) 1st Round (593rd/594th) 1st Round (595th/596th) 1st Round (597th/598th) 1st Round (599th/600th) 1st Round (601st/602nd) 1st Round (603rd/604th) 1st Round (605th/606th) 1st Round (607th/608th) 1st Round (609th/610th) 1st Round (611st/612th) 1st Round (613th/614th) 1st Round (615th/616th) 1st Round (617th/618th) 1st Round (619th/620th) 1st Round (621st/622nd) 1st Round (623rd/624th) 1st Round (625th/626th) 1st Round (627th/628th) 1st Round (629th/630th) 1st Round (631st/632th) 1st Round (633rd/634th) 1st Round (635th/636th) 1st Round (637th/638th) 1st Round (639th/640th) 1st Round (641st/642th) 1st Round (643rd/644th) 1st Round (645th/646th) 1st Round (647th/648th) 1st Round (649th/650th) 1st Round (651st/652nd) 1st Round (653rd/654th) 1st Round (655th/656th) 1st Round (657th/658th) 1st Round (659th/660th) 1st Round (661st/662th) 1st Round (663rd/664th) 1st Round (665th/666th) 1st Round (667th/668th) 1st Round (669th/670th) 1st Round (671st/672th) 1st Round (673rd/674th) 1st Round (675th/676th) 1st Round (677th/678th) 1st Round (679th/680th) 1st Round (681st/682nd) 1st Round (683rd/684th) 1st Round (685th/686th) 1st Round (687th/688th) 1st Round (689th/690th) 1st Round (691st/692th) 1st Round (693rd/694th) 1st Round (695th/696th) 1st Round (697th/698th) 1st Round (699th/700th) 1st Round (701st/702nd) 1st Round (703rd/704th) 1st Round (705th/706th) 1st Round (707th/708th) 1st Round (709th/710th) 1st Round (711st/712th) 1st Round (713th/714th) 1st Round (715th/716th) 1st Round (717th/718th) 1st Round (719th/720th) 1st Round (721st/722nd) 1st Round (723rd/724th) 1st Round (725th/726th) 1st Round (727th/728th) 1st Round (729th/730th) 1st Round (731st/732th) 1st Round (733rd/734th) 1st Round (735th/736th) 1st Round (737th/738th) 1st Round (739th/740th) 1st Round (741st/742th) 1st Round (743rd/744th) 1st Round (745th/746th) 1st Round (747th/748th) 1st Round (749th/750th) 1st Round (751st/752nd) 1st Round (753rd/754th) 1st Round (755th/756th) 1st Round (757th/758th) 1st Round (759th/760th) 1st Round (761st/762th) 1st Round (763rd/764th) 1st Round (765th/766th) 1st Round (767th/768th) 1st Round (769th/770th) 1st Round (771st/772th) 1st Round (773rd/774th) 1st Round (775th/776th) 1st Round (777th/778th) 1st Round (779th/780th) 1st Round (781st/782nd) 1st Round (783rd/784th) 1st Round (785th/786th) 1st Round (787th/788th) 1st Round (789th/790th) 1st Round (791st/792th) 1st Round (793rd/794th) 1st Round (795th/796th) 1st Round (797th/798th) 1st Round (799th/800th) 1st Round (801st/802nd) 1st Round (803rd/804th) 1st Round (805th/806th) 1st Round (807th/808th) 1st Round (809th/810th) 1st Round (811st/812th) 1st Round (813th/814th) 1st Round (815th/816th) 1st Round (817th/818th) 1st Round (819th/820th) 1st Round (821st/822nd) 1st Round (823rd/824th) 1st Round (825th/826th) 1st Round (827th/828th) 1st Round (829th/830th) 1st Round (83

Bittersweet Sugar
Glyn Leach on the return of
a fallen hero, page 29

sport

Parkes takes care
Guy Hodgson meets
unworried of Ewood, page 30

FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP: Time for De Glanville to command centre stage at Twickenham for title decider against Tricolores



Jack Rowell (second left) watches his England charges run through their line-out routine under the sweep of Twickenham's stands yesterday in readiness for this afternoon's meeting with France

Photograph: David Ashdown

England wary of unfamiliar French

CHRIS HEWETT

Rugby Union Correspondent

Olivier Merle's sudden occupation of the moral high ground has provoked so much laughter on this side of the Channel that England might be forgiven for thinking that the French have finally relinquished their notoriously tentative grip on rugby reality. They would be mistaken. Twickenham will be no place for complacent assumptions this afternoon.

There is no doubt that England can win – and win well – for they have seen off better French sides than this in recent years. If Abdel Benazzi, the visiting captain, is to be believed, the Tricolores have only a 30 per cent chance of victory – a figure that just about equates with the suspected fitness level of Benazzi's hugely influential out-side-half, Alain Penaud – and it will come as no great surprise

if the Red Rose is in full bloom come the final whistle.

But as Tim Rodber, the England No 8, said yesterday, the unfamiliarity of the French line-up only adds to the potential pitfalls lying in the path of the favourites. Had Emile Ntamack, Philippe Saint-Andre, Thomas Castaignède and Richard Dourthe been strutting their stuff across the greensward, England would have known what to expect. By comparison, the likes of Laurent Leflamand and David Venditti are, for the time being at least, spectres in the darkness.

The danger for England is that they simply cannot predict how the French will approach what amounts to a Five Nations title decider. Benazzi, a great back-row forward in anyone's language, is hard-headed enough to take the pragmatic line (pragmatic? a French swearword surely). On the other hand, he may just throw caution to the wind on the

basis that his side have far less to lose than their opponents.

Now that really would be worth watching. Penaud and Venditti apart, there are two other members of the Brive back division on view and if Philippe Carboneau and Christophe Lemaire enjoy anything like the space given to them by Leicester in the final of the Heineken Cup in January, England will be playing for pride rather than a Grand Slam when they reach Cardiff in a fortnight's time.

The right attitude will be of the essence for both sides, which brings us neatly back to Monsieur Merle, the man mountain from Montferrand via Grenoble. His view of the English rugby mentality – "very unappealing, for their players are arrogant and pretentious" – might carry more clout were it not for his own reputation as an Alp-sized liquidator with an over-active right fist. As Ricky Evans, an

aggravated Welsh prop, is prepared to testify in court, Merle is no one's idea of a "play up and play the game" traditionalist.

It is, though, true to say that

the French have taken some public steps towards cleaning up their act. Merle, Dourthe and Franck Tournaire have all been suspended for violent transgressions during the past

three seasons and those efforts are in stark contrast to England's under-the-carpet approach. The Rugby Football Union will not want to hear this, but the French are getting it right more often than most these days.

Sensibly, both Jack Rowell, the England coach, and Phil de Glanville, his captain, have spent much of the last week emphasising the supreme importance of discipline. "We became involved in a few things that would have been better avoided during the first few minutes in Dublin a fortnight back and it's essential that we steer clear of that trap against the French," said De Glanville, whose powers of leadership were rightly extolled by Rowell earlier in the week.

Today's match could scarcely be more important from De Glanville's point of view. Omitted from the preliminary Lions squad of 62 and heavily criticised in some quarters for the

perceived anonymity of his international performances, he must prove to his doubters – Fran Cotton included – that he can do more than simply organise the players around him. To be blunt, he needs to catch the eye on centre stage rather than pull a few strings from behind the curtain.

As so often this season, untimely injury has hindered the captain's preparation. The ankle problems that affected De Glanville earlier this week are said to have cleared, but then Penaud is reported by the French to be in the pink as well. The black arts of disinformation are a rife in rugby as in every other walk of life and it will be no shock if both Jeremy Goscott and David Aucagne, the talented stand-off from Pau, make it off the bench and on to the pitch.

With a young English pack showing early signs of impending greatness, De Glanville and his fellow backs should see

more than enough of the ball to secure victory and thus set up a mighty finale at Cardiff Arms Park. Although the French back row looks a class unit, especially now that Olivier Magne is involved on a full-time basis, the home trio showed enough against Ireland to suggest that they will shade it in the loose. Equally, it is hard to see the French tight forwards forcing Jason Leonard and company into their shells, especially as there is no Olivier Roumat to test Simon Shaw's mettle in the middle of the line-out.

Perhaps more than in any other match this season, the first 15 minutes hold the key. Five weeks ago, Brive caught Leicester so cold that by the time the Tigers realised they had a game on their hands, it had already slipped away. If England can hit the ground running, they should avoid a similar fate.

Leonard and Benazzi profiles, Scots look to 'Dit', page 28

ENGLAND v FRANCE			
at Twickenham			
T Stimpson	Newcastle	15 J-L Sadourny	Colomiers
J Sleightholme	Bath	14 L Leflamand	Bourgnin
W Carling	Harlequins	13 C Lemaire	Brive
P de Glanville	Bath, capt	12 S Glas	Bourgnin
T Underwood	Newcastle	11 D Venditti	Brive
P Grayson	Northampton	10 A Penaud	Brive
A Gomersall	Wolves	9 P Carboneau	Brive
G Rowntree	Leicester	8 C Callesco	Toulouse
M Regan	Bristol	7 M Dal Maso	Agen
J Leonard	Harlequins	6 F Tournaire	Narbonne
M Johnson	Leicester	5 O Merle	Montferrand
S Shaw	Leicester	4 H Merle	Toulouse
L Dallaglio	Wolves	3 A Benazzi	Agen, capt
T Rother	Northampton	2 P Pelicci	Dax
R Hill	Saracens	1 O Magne	Dax

Replacements: 16 J Goscott (Bath), 17 D Aucagne (Pau), 18 A Haden (Leicester), 19 J Clarke (Rotherham), 20 D Garforth (Leicester), 21 P Gearing (Gloucester).

Referee: J Fleming (Scotland). Kick-off: 3.0 (BBC1).

American football could provide model

DAVID LLEWELLYN

Rugby union was yesterday invited to adopt American football's salary capping system and also to seek backing from international companies. Dan Rooney, the president of Pittsburgh Steelers, speaking at a seminar in London on the state

of the game, insisted that salary capping was the only fair system to ensure that no club went broke through exorbitant wage demands, and that the wealthier clubs did not have a bottomless barrel.

"It is important to get everyone on the same page," said Rooney, who had interrupted a busy schedule to speak at the

seminar, organised by Rugby News magazine in association with The Independent. "The way it works is that the teams pool their gross revenue in a season, and this is shared equally among all 30 teams," Rooney explained. While no maximum wage operates in the NFL, there is a minimum level. Although the salary cap

appealed to the Rugby Football Union secretary, Tony Hallett, also at the seminar, he said it would be difficult, if not impossible, to enforce from a legal and practical point of view. Rooney invited English clubs to seek overseas investment. He claimed the United Kingdom provides more visitors to Disney World in Florida than any other

country. He also revealed that the Disney Corporation is in the process of building a sports complex. "You have to deal with international sponsors," he said. "You have to align yourselves with, for example, telephone companies, breweries, banks and the leisure industry as well as major players such as the Heinz corporation, Disney

and Sony. Television has opened the door to advertising and sponsors."

Whether more English clubs have the courage to follow the example of Harlequins and seek international funding – they are sponsored by NEC – remains to be seen but the invitation and opportunity exists. Seminar report, page 29

In Monday's 20-page sports section

Phil Shaw talks to
Steve Bull, the local hero
of the Black Country

**On Eurostar,
you can enjoy
a relaxing game
of FizzBuzz.**

Don't bother lining out at passport control or scrumming for a taxi at Paris airport. Sit in a warm, spacious Eurostar. Read a romantic novel, discuss theology, perhaps even play a relaxing game of scrabble. What could be more civilised? Oh, and in the unlikely event that you wish to indulge in an alcoholic beverage, the bar is open all the way to the centre of Paris. No wonder rugby supporters prefer training to flying.

0345 303030
or see an appointed travel agent or railway station

Calls charged at local rate. All calls are monitored for quality.

ICC chief wants Test world championship

Cricket

A formally recognised Test cricket world championship, first proposed by the *Independent* four years ago, could be in place by the end of the year.

Speaking in Johannesburg during the first Test between South Africa and Australia David Richards, the chief executive of the International Cricket Council, said yesterday that he would be seeking assurances from all nine Test playing nations that a formalised world championship would have their backing. "The next ICC meeting is in Kuala Lumpur on March 23 and once we've agreed in principle it's just a question of juggling itineraries to make sure that all the countries play each other home and away over, perhaps, a four-year period," he said. The *Independent* suggested a system with points awarded for winning and drawing Test matches, away wins worth twice as many points as those at home, and bonus points awarded for series victories.

Matthew Engel, the editor of *Wisden*, recently suggested an alternative system whereby a team winning a series would get two

points, one point for a draw and no points for a lost series. "The points system suggested by Matthew Engel seems to be the simplest," Richards said.

Richards added: "There is a feeling that we need to reaffirm what the players feel about the importance and status of Test cricket and a world championship would certainly raise its profile. The ICC cannot limit the number of one-day games played around the world – that is up to each individual country – but both Mark Taylor and Hansie Cronje (captains of Australia and South Africa, respectively) have expressed their concerns to me about the hectic nature of modern playing schedules."

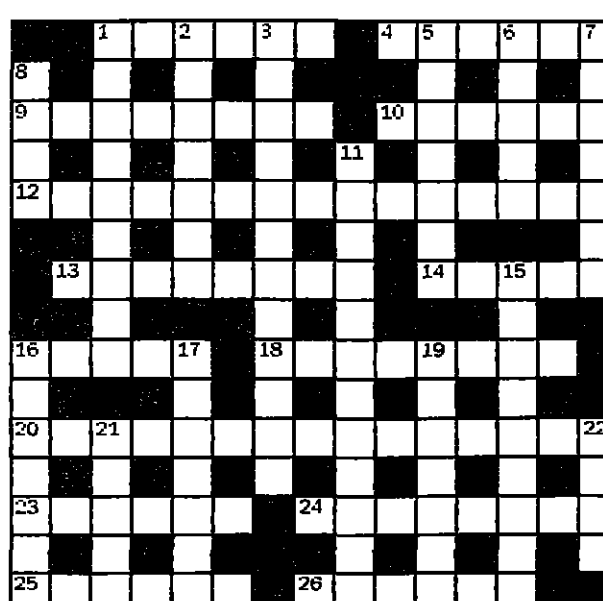
The England management has agreed to allow wives and girlfriends to join the players during the tour to the West Indies next year, the itinerary for which was announced yesterday. The tour will also allow more time for rest and preparation than the tours to Zimbabwe and New Zealand. The party will acclimatise in Antigua before travelling to Jamaica for the first Test.

S Africa fight back, page 29
West Indies tour itinerary, Sporting Digest, page 31

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3235, Saturday 1 March

By Phi



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution

WESSES BARBICISE
L W I A N H R A
SIOBOARDS OMAR
2 O U L E S O H E
GALAMITY MUSTER
D O C E N O
SPED LOLLIPOP
F E D O E N O
SORENESS CONK
W R I A U
TEEPER NUMERATE
U A U T
E O D A N T I S P O S E D
E T I A E U I T E
ARDENTLY DISMAL

ACROSS

- Spy group infiltrating most of single party (6)
- Causes annoyance when thrown into river (6)
- Former rioter reformed outside (8)
- Sailor embraced by chap from group of businessmen (6)
- Produces a net deficit? (6,2,3,4)
- She's foot in motion, showing a style of dancing (4-4)
- Bird dog heading off (5)
- Glasses in bits, we hear (5)
- Lancashire town now coming back enthralled by French rock (8)
- Slug repellent not usually seen in garden (6-5,4)
- Hurried to acquire some police rank (6)
- Advanced job that's worried one who's lapsed (8)
- A couple of lines about yesterday's exam (1-5)
- Show annoyance or restraint (6)

DOWN

- Thus to vote unexpectedly will install Conservative on the quiet (5,4)
- Present scoundrel with the cost of accommodation (7)
- More apathy stirred up about artist's "essential" treatment (12)
- Fool losing head after individual turned up to make a proclamation (7)
- Not entirely fake punch – it goes to the head (5)
- We hear Hebridean island exploded with colour (2-4)
- Communication missing a long time? Confusion results (4)
- Unusual cameo with harvester in full (4-1,7)
- Joke, English, about historical period of prosperity (6, 3)
- A description of Gibraltar or part of Russia? (7)
- Frutless means of access provided without hesitation (7)
- Made safe with skill, mostly, and with experience (7)
- Topless dive? Lean forward suddenly (5)
- Cute bird's sound cut short (4)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the new Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: Sue Nicholson, Laurence J. Thorpe, Fardien R. Smith, Saitzine G. Kowicz, Preston J. Spivack, Harrow.

سكوا من الأصل